



MAJOR REVAMP FOR MERRY HILL

Report by Richard Guttridge

PLANS for a new leisure centre as part of a major overhaul of Merry Hill shopping centre have been revealed.

Work to improve pedestrian and bus routes around the station at Merry Hill will also start in the new year.

The shopping centre itself will undergo improvement works as owners Intu looks to modernise the centre.

Development boss Brad Critcher said the company was looking to create an extension to the centre for leisure purposes, with a bowling alley being one of the options explored.

The work is intended to help the complex in Dudley compete with Birmingham city centre and to attract shoppers from across the wider Midlands.

Merry Hill development director Mr Critcher said: "November and December is when the centre is at its busiest, so the work will begin after Christmas.

"We want to encourage people to come to the centre for a bit longer, given the competitive pressures all centres are under.

"We will be refreshing the malls and the entrances to bring the centre into 2017."

Intu has had major plans for Merry Hill shopping centre since taking over the centre three years ago, with improving the bus station among its top priorities.

Previous proposals for a £3 million bus station were shelved in 2013 after they were deemed too expensive.

Metro

The Midland Metro line is eventually due to reach the shopping centre in Brierley Hill as part of a major expansion of the network, which has already been extended into Birmingham city centre.

The Metro expansion would also low people travelling by train from Shropshire and further afield to reach Merry Hill by changing at Wolverhampton or Birmingham.

Business bosses have welcomed the planned revamp of the Merry Hill shopping centre, which will include changes to the bus station and a new leisure complex.

Ninder Johal, who is a board member at the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, said the plans would be a boost for the region.

He said: "Intu is a large property with operations all around the country, therefore it is very pleasing they have decided to invest in their facilities in the Black Country.

"Clearly, they must have had other opportunities, so it is fantastic to see.

"With the investment which is coming into other parts of the Black Country, this is only going to help bring in more and more visitors."

Dudley Council's regeneration boss Khurshid Ahmed said: "It is positive, especially the leisure site. With all the problems with obesity and the rest of it, this will give people something to do."

MUSCLE MAN JOSH IS MAGAZINE COVER STAR



Natural Athlete cover star Josh Westwood from Halesowen takes a break from working out at Haden Hill Leisure Centre to flex his muscles

"I PLAN to have one of the greatest natural physiques in the world."

This is the ambition of Josh Westwood, a 28-year-old former carpenter from Halesowen.

And so far so good for the fitness model in the making, as he is due to appear on the front cover of the Natural Athlete Magazine.

He got into weight training from the age of 16, but only took the idea of turning professional seriously three years ago, when he decided to improve his nutrition.

He said: "I've been practicing jujutsu for 10

years and I'm currently a brown belt. I decided my nutrition needed to tighten up and my body fat needed to get lower.

"I started going to Haden Hill Leisure Centre and improving my cardio fitness and that's when I realised I was capable of going on stage.

"I attended a fitness model competition by Fit Factor at the NEC in Birmingham for the BodyPower Expo in May 2015, but the guy running it told me I needed to have a lower body fat percentage.

"So that's what I worked on, I put my heart

and soul into training and in May this year I got into the final of the same competition."

On the way out, Josh passed a stall offering athletes the chance to get on the front of their magazine and after a successful social media competition, he is now due to appear on the cover of the new magazine.

But that's not all for Josh, he is participating in UK BFF Midlands Championship competition at Birmingham Town Hall and working out two hours a day on a strict low carbohydrate diet. "I do miss the fast food, white bread and crumpets," he admitted.

ACCIDENT

Children hit by car near primary school

POLICE are continuing to search for a driver following a hit-and-run outside a primary school in Stourbridge.

Two three-year-olds – a boy and a girl – and two adults were injured in the incident close to Hob Green Primary School in Wollescote, when hit by a red Ford Focus C-Max just before 9am on Monday. The youngsters and women were taken to hospital but were not seriously hurt.

Police have launched an appeal to find the driver and more witnesses. Call 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

INDUSTRY

Tata Steel group in further slump

TATA Steel, which has sites across the Black Country, slumped to a net loss of £358m for the quarter to June as uncertainty continues for its UK operations.

The Indian steel giant was hit by £438m losses.

The company is understood to be in talks with German steel giant Thyssen-Krupp over a possible merger with its European operation, which includes the Port Talbot plant as well as Black Country operations in Brierley Hill, Wednesbury, Walsall and Wednesfield.

RETAIL

Former supermarket goes on the market

A FORMER supermarket building in Halesowen has been put on the market.

The site on Halesowen Road, near the Kent Road island, has been put up for let for around £190,000 a year by Dudley-based Sellers surveyors.

The sale advert reads: "The premises comprise a single storey supermarket. A roller shutter door is located to the side of the property providing goods access."

The supermarket was a Co-op for more than five years until it was taken over by Welsh-based chain Harry Tuffins. It has remained empty since earlier this year.

INSIDE

WIN TICKETS FOR LEGO SHOW



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More than £15k to help village ventures

MORE than £15,000 has been granted to community groups near Stourbridge following successful bids to a Government scheme.

Hagley Rambler Scouts Group will receive £10,000 towards a new minibus and Hagley Parish Council will benefit by at least £6,000 towards the new pavilion in Hagley Playing Fields, after they submitted a joint bid with West Hagley Football Club.

The funding will come from The New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme at Bromsgrove District Council.

Peter Rowbottom, of Hagley Residents Action Group, who previously lobbied the district council to pass on New Homes Bonus money to local communities, said: "I would like to congratulate both Hagley groups on their successful bids and look forward to villagers benefitting from both the new minibus and the new pavilion building when it is completed."

Supporting

"I would also like to thank Hagley's district councillors, Steve Colella and Rachel Jenkins, for formally supporting the bids when they were submitted. This is the second successive year that Hagley and other areas in the district have received New Homes Bonus money from Bromsgrove Council and I look forward to further payments in future years that will bring further benefits."

The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central Government to local councils to reflect and incentivise housing growth in their areas.

The payments were agreed at a meeting of the Bromsgrove Council Cabinet on September 7, with a further agreement to reconsider increasing the agreed amount for the pavilion after a direct request from Councillor Colella, who represents the Hagley West ward, said: "I am pleased that the two Hagley bids received support from the NHB Panel."

In total more than £50,000 will go to community groups across Bromsgrove district.

Elderly facing extra fees as funds are cut

ELDERLY residents in some private retirement homes may have to fork out hundreds of pounds a year extra as a result of cost-cutting plans by Dudley Council.

The authority has pulled funding from the Supported People living scheme - leaving residents to make up the difference themselves.

The scheme helps vulnerable people to live at home independently and funds help with daily chores.

Among the homes affected is Herald Court, in Priory Street, Dudley, where residents would now have to pay operator, Stonewater, £9.38 a week for the service.

Cabinet member for adult social care Councillor Qadar Zada said: "We are facing unprecedented challenges to the way we deliver services in the light of significant cuts in central government funding. As a result we are having to review our investment in preventative services to focus more on helping people live more independently."

"We have had to withdraw support to supported living schemes. This has previously provided funding at Herald Court towards the cost of a warden. Whilst this support may be valued by residents, we had to take the difficult decision to remove this funding in order to ensure that the council is able to support people who have a statutory entitlement to care services."

Worried

"The supported living provider will continue to offer a service but will charge those residents who wish to use it."

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said he was worried to hear about the extra costs for residents. "I'm calling on the Government to ensure residents at Herald Court do not lose out," said the Labour MP. "I want to ask the council and the housing association what they can do to ensure my constituents' homes are safe."

Sharron Gough, for Stonewater, said: "Stonewater was advised in March that funding that we received for the scheme manager services we provide at Herald Court could be impacted."

"We are disappointed this service could no longer be provided as Stonewater has been working hard with the council to secure partial funding for this service."

Ex-chippie owners fined over rats



The former owners of Penny's Fish Bar in Long Lane, Halesowen, have been fined after rats were found there

THE former owners of a Halesowen chippy which was twice infested with rats have been fined thousands of pounds.

Shocking conditions inside Penny's Fish Bar, in Long Lane were discovered by environmental officers from Dudley Council on a routine visit in August last year.

Evidence of rats were found and areas, including the potato preparation room, were shut for a week while the rodents were removed. Five months later inspectors returned to find evidence of rats and other hygiene problems including a lack of measures to protect against contamination.

Jasbir Singh and Sandeep Singh - who owned the shop from February 2014 until January this year - each pleaded guilty to a total of 18 food safety and hygiene offences when they appeared before magistrates in Wolverhampton last week.

Jasbir Singh, aged 50, of High Park Close, Smethwick, was fined £2,000 and Sandeep Singh, 43,

of Bell Road, Walsall, was fined £1,500. Both have to pay £850 costs and £120 victim surcharge.

Inspectors found that the premises were poorly pest-proofed and needed structural repair. Officers visited again on January 13 when it was noted there had been some improvement but seven hygiene contraventions were recorded.

Mr Aftab Rashid, defending, said his clients had a 'lack of interest' in the business after it proved to be not as lucrative as they had hoped.

Knife crime rises by a third over three years

KNIFE crime in the Black Country has risen by a third over the last three years, according to new figures.

Since 2013 West Midlands Police has investigated 2,026 crimes involving knives in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, with the number of incidents rising by 33 per cent since 2013 - just three years.

The figures have prompted WMP to issue a plea for communities to 'come together' in a bid to stop people from carrying knives.

In Sandwell there have been more than 700 alleged crimes where a knife was involved over the last three years, while the figure was 546 in Wolverhampton, 407 in Walsall and 351 in Dudley.

The incidents include the fatal stabbing of Mircea Gheorghe Cozmiuc, aged 23, who last week was found with stab wounds in Carter Road, Wolverhampton. He later died of his injuries.

The figures, which come via a Freedom of Information request, show the worrying extent of reported crimes involving knives that are taking place in the Black Country.

Soho and Victoria in Sandwell has consistently seen the highest number of incidents where knife use has been alleged, with 18 recorded so far this year and a total of 81 in the last three years.

In Dudley, Brierley Hill and the St James' wards have both seen 36 incidents involving knives over three years.

This comes despite knife bin campaigns across the region.

Views are sought on health services

THE public are invited to attend a meeting about GP services in Dudley borough.

The Primary Care Commissioning Committee (PCCC) meeting will be held on Friday, September 30, at the Zion Christian Centre in Halesowen.

The role of the PCC is to ensure collective decisions on planning, developing, delivering, monitoring and managing the budget for GP services across Dudley, under delegated authority from NHS England.

The closure of Coombs Wood Surgery will be a topic of discussion at the meeting, being chaired by Mr Steve Wellings, Vice-Chair for Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group. Questions should be emailed in advance to Lindsey.Harding@dudleyccg.nhs.uk by September 26.

Legendary AP rides in for charity event

LEGENDARY jockey AP 'Tony' McCoy will be regaling fans in Dudley next week. Thursday's event at the Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill, includes a three-course meal, charity raffle and auction for Birmingham Children's Hospital. Call Route 39 on 01902 244 220.

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'Dirty old man', 85, is spared jail for assault

AN 85-year-old 'dirty old man' who fondled a married woman has been spared jail because of his age and ill health.

The victim was staying at the home of Joseph Colley in Stourbridge whilst visiting someone. She had spent the night in a spare room, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. She had gone to the bedroom, shut the door and started to undress, explained Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting, when Colley entered the room and put his hands up her T-shirt. She shouted at him to go away and he left the room.

"She went downstairs and called the police who arrived soon afterwards to find her in the front garden, sobbing, head in hands and extremely distressed. She called him a dirty old man," said Mr Searle. "She has even destroyed the clothes she was wearing at the time so she is not reminded of what happened."

Colley, now living at Blackberry Lane, Halesowen, had been given a conditional discharge for a similar offence on another woman in 1994.

Mr Simon Burch, defending, said: "This is a frail old man of 85 who had consumed a glass of wine and some whisky. His judgement was clouded."

Colley admitted sexual assault and was given a 20 month jail sentence suspended for two years and made the subject of a restraining order banning any contact with the victim.

Judge Amjad Nawaz told him: "If you were slightly younger I would have no hesitation in sending you to prison immediately."

Zoo celebrates a bumper month

MORE than 4,000 visitors flocked to Dudley Zoo on Bank Holiday Monday – as bosses hailed one of the best Augusts in the Castle Hill attraction's history.

On Bank Holiday Monday alone 4,674 visitors passed through the turnstiles – the highest turnout in around a decade.

Zoo director Derek Grove said: "We've had an incredible holiday period and are delighted with the numbers, which we believe to be our best August season in at least 25 years."

During August 64,518 visitors headed to the zoo – a rise of 79.4 per cent rise compared to the same period in 2006, 14 per cent up on last year's 56,470 total and 18 per cent up on 2014.

Road reduced to one lane by work

A SECTION of busy dual carriageway will be reduced to one lane until tomorrow (Friday) week as verge maintenance work takes place on Manor Way, Halesowen, from 9.30am and 3.30pm, near Junction 3 of the M5.

Yob who threw first punch awaits sentence



Daniel Lloyd – threw punch

TWO juveniles aged 13 and 15 were among yobs who attacked football fan Nic Cruwys leaving him fighting for his life.

Now Joseph Lister, aged 19, from Wednesfield, and Connor Pearson, 16, and Joe Wood, 15, both from Wolverhampton are behind bars. Ryan Meer, 19, from Gaiety, and Robert Beech, 19, Wednesfield, were given suspended sentences. Daniel Lloyd, 19, from Sedgley, will be sentenced within the next 28 days.

The court heard about their part in the sickening and barbaric assault that left Mr Cruwys with permanent injuries. It was revealed that Lloyd delivered the punch which knocked the Watford fan to

the ground, then Lister and Pearson attacked Mr Cruwys and Wood stamped on his head. Beech showed threatening behaviour during the attack in Littles Lane in Wolverhampton in March last year after a game between Wolverhampton and Watford.

CCTV taken from Carvers showed Mr Cruwys suffering repeated brutal punches and kicks. The horrific attack left him in a coma for weeks. His wife Jodie was told at one stage he may not survive.

Wood, of Woodstock Road, was sentenced to four years and eight months in a Young Offenders Institution after pleading guilty to grievous bodily harm with

intent. Lister, of Palmer Close, was given 30 months in a Young Offenders Institution and Pearson, of Ettingshall Road, 12 months in a Young Offenders Institution after pleading guilty to causing grievous bodily harm.

Meer, of Watling Street was given an eight-month prison sentence, suspended for two years, 200 hours' unpaid work after pleading guilty to threatening behaviour.

Beech, of Springhill Road, was given a two-year sentence in a Young Offenders Institution, suspended for 12 months after pleading guilty to threatening behaviour.

Murder probe as attack victim dies in hospital

A MURDER investigation has begun after a man found with head injuries in a Halesowen road died in hospital.

Karl Swift, aged 33, died in hospital on Saturday having been found on New Road with serious injuries at around 12.30am on Friday.

Detectives are now treating the death of Mr Swift, from South Yorkshire, as murder.

Two men from the South Yorkshire region, aged 23 and 58, were arrested on suspicion of grievous bodily harm. The pair have since been bailed pending further investigation by police.

Police believe that an incident may have taken place at the nearby William Shenstone Wetherspoon's pub, in Queensway, shortly before the attack.

Detectives have urged anyone with information about the incident to come forward and are particularly keen to hear from anyone who was in the pub on Thursday evening.

An area of New Road was cordoned off whilst forensic experts examined the scene at the weekend.

Detective Inspector Warren Hines, from West Midlands Police CID, said: "Our investigation is progressing and while we have now made two arrests we still need to speak to any witnesses who were in the area late on Thursday night into Friday morning. We still believe there may have been an incident at the William Shenstone Wetherspoon's pub in Halesowen prior to the victim leaving and we would ask anyone with information to call 101 as soon as possible.

Crimestoppers

"Alternatively information can be passed to Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111."

Eddie Gershon, spokesperson for JD Wetherspoon, said: "This is very sad news that a gentleman has lost his life and we extend our condolences to his family and friends. We will now be working closely with the police to help assist them in any way we can and provide CCTV footage if need be."

Councillor Alan Taylor, who represents the Halesowen South ward, spoke of his shock at the tragedy.

He said: "This is absolutely tragic and I feel for the family and friends who are now left facing this.

"Halesowen is usually a safe and quiet town and something like this hasn't happened in a long time. "We can only hope that the police investigation gets those responsible."

A local businessman, who did wish to be named, said: "From my experience of working here and near to Wetherspoon's, it is always a nice pub where you go and have a quiet drink."



The William Shenstone pub where an 'incident' took place before badly injured Mr Swift was found



Karl Swift, aged 33, died after being attacked



New Road in Halesowen where Mr Swift was found

NEWS IN BRIEF

No risk to health say water bosses

RESIDENTS have reported discoloured water coming from taps around Stourbridge, Hagley and Halesowen, prompting an investigation by Severn Trent Water.

Samples were being taken but there is not believed to be any risk to health. A spokesman said: "Discolouration is usually caused by the disturbance of mains sediments. Although unappealing, we have no reason to believe there is any risk to your health."

They advise running the cold water tap at a gentle rate for up to 20 minutes before use.

MP backing bid to combat pay cuts

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin has backed a campaign to support staff at Marks & Spencer and other companies who are facing pay cuts, which the MP says is being done to fund the national living wage.

Staff at M&S could lose up to £6,000 in Sunday pay, holiday pay and pension cuts, as the firm meets the Government's new living wage of £8.50 per hour. Labour MP Mr Austin said: "M&S is cutting pay to offset the cost of the national living wage, and the Government has done nothing to help protect staff."

Classic cars to visit glass cone

MEMBERS of the Black Country Classic Car Club will be showing off their vehicles in Wordsley.

The club is supporting a classic car rally being held at Red House Glass Cone, in High Street, on Sunday, September 25.

Cars will be on display at various locations around the site from 11am to 4pm.

The club has been established since May 2003 and now has more than 75 members.

Garden wall is part demolished in accident

A MOTORIST was taken to hospital after a Ford Ka crashed into a brick wall in Brierley Hill last week.

Part of the garden wall was demolished in the incident at Peter's Hill Road, close to Peter's Hill Primary School, at around 4.10pm on Wednesday, September 7.

Ten firefighters from Brierley Hill and Stourbridge helped deal with the aftermath. A spokesman: "Persons in the car had been released prior to the arrival of the fire service."

Bard best bits are free

TOURING theatre company Oddsocks is visiting Halesowen to perform The Bard's Best Bits of Romeo and Juliet. The free 90-minute performance is suitable for all the family and will be staged in the library at the Cornbow Centre on Saturday, October 29 at 10am. Call (01384) 812982.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



THE swallows are preparing to leave us for Africa, gathering in great clouds to fatten themselves on autumn bugs. It raises a question. What is the collective noun for swallows? The answer is a flight, herd, richness or swoop of swallows. Or my favourite, a gulp of swallows.

THIS week will be remembered for the day the big chimney came down. It stood on the Isle of Grain, 800 feet high. As the chimney was demolished and collapsed into itself, the chimney lining of ash and soot stayed where it was, a column of dust marking where the chimney had been. It was like a ghost-chimney, slowly fading. If anybody can explain the physics behind it, I'd love to hear.

A READER reports buying a box of two chocolate eclairs. A fervent recycler, she consulted the instructions on the pack and discovered: "Carton - card, widely recycled. Tray - plastic, check local recycling. Window - plastic, not currently recycled." So in order to do her civic duty she must cut out the window, check with her local council about the tray and put the box in the recycle bin. And you begin to understand why hundreds of thousands of tons of rubbish go in the wrong bins. Do we really



need a little plastic window to see what eclairs look like?

"ECLAIR," incidentally, is the only word in Chambers English Dictionary defined by a joke: "A cake, long in shape but short in duration."

I ASKED why some cyclists insist on using the roads when cycle tracks are provided. A peddler emails starchy: "If I decide to cycle on the road then that is what I will continue to do, no matter how many cycle paths our government decides to waste money on." He tells me his cycling wife has a helmet camera to record "the inane things people in vehicles do." Why does this not surprise me?

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

MP unhappy about constituency shake-up

MP James Morris has criticised Boundary Commission plans to abolish the Halesowen and Rowley Regis seat as part of a huge carve-up of Parliamentary constituencies.

Mr Morris, who has held the seat for the Tories since 2010, says he is considering appealing the proposal, which would see Halesowen North, Halesowen and South Belle Vale become part of a new Selly Oak and Halesowen constituency.

By Peter Madeley

He said: "I am disappointed that the commission has split parts of Halesowen and Rowley Regis in its latest review."

"There will now be a period of consultation and over the next few days I will be talking to community groups and local residents about these proposals and putting together a local response."

Shift

The plans would also see Blackheath, Cradley Heath, Rowley and Old Hill shift into the Warley constituency, while Hayley Green and Cradley South would be part of the Stourbridge constituency.

The West Midlands is one of the most radically affected regions in the Boundary Commission's review of Parliamentary constituencies. The area is set to lose six seats under the plans in a proposed move which will reduce the total number of MPs in Britain from 650 to 600.

Two seats in the Black Country will disappear, while some wards will come under Birmingham constituencies. They include Sandwell's Abbey ward, which will be incorporated into Birmingham Edgbaston, Soho and Victoria, which becomes part of Ladywood, and Walsall's Pheasey Park Farm, which becomes part of Birmingham Erdington.

Meanwhile, Brierley Hill will be put in to Stourbridge, leaving the new Dudley West ward without a civic centre.

The Black Country will be left with 11 wards to be abolished and the two West Bromwich seats carved up as part of a new West Bromwich constituency.

The changes will pit MPs for the same party against each other as candidates for re-election and could have a big impact on the outcome of the 2020 poll.

Elton rockets to Birmingham



Sir Elton John in concert at Walsall FC's Banks's Stadium

ELTON John is to return to the West Midlands next summer for a concert at the Genting Arena on June 7.

Tickets are expected to sell fast when they go on sale tomorrow (Friday).

It will be Elton's 36th performance in the second city and will mark a spectacular return to the West Midlands after his triumphant concert at Walsall FC's Banks's Stadium last year. He last played in Birmingham in 2012.

The 69-year-old singer, who has sold more than 250 million records worldwide, is showing no signs of slowing down and the announcement comes just a week after he headlined at Hyde Park for a BBC Radio 2 show. He also released his 33rd studio album Wonderful Crazy Night.

Around 14,000 people packed into the Banks's last summer on an unforgettable night as Elton played hits including Rocket Man, Candle in the Wind and I'm Still Standing in a two-and-a-half-hour show.

Tickets for the Genting Arena date go on general sale at 10am from thetackit.elfactory.com or by calling 0844 33 88 222.

Hunt is on for the 'relaxed robber'

THE hunt is on for a 'relaxed robber' after a string of bank and shop raids across the Black Country.

This raider is so laid back, that in one instance customers just feet away were unaware that a robbery was taking place.

Now police have issued an appeal via BBC One's Crimewatch programme in a bid to catch the brazen raider, thought to be responsible for robberies at at least two banks and a shop.

The man can be seen on CCTV apparently brandishing a gun during robberies in Oldbury, Bearwood and Dudley.

Police believe he has also targeted three other banks and shops in Birmingham, all between November and March. Officers say he has stolen around £20,000.

All victims said he approached staff in a calm manner before forcing them to hand over money. Some witnesses failed to even realise they were watching a robbery.

Officers believe the man carried out his first raid in Erdington on November 26 last year and then travelled to Dudley to rob the One Stop convenience store on Buffery Road an hour and 20 minutes later.

On another day he targeted the Lloyds TSB in Bearwood Road, Smethwick. It was raining and he left his umbrella by a chair as he carried out the raid.

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PHONE FOR BROCHURE

Shenstone legacy was on agenda at institute

A FORMER English teacher entertained members of West Bromwich Institute with a talk on William Shenstone of Halesowen.

Andrew Duggan told the West Bromwich Institute that Mr Shenstone fancied himself as a great poet but the literary critics of the time felt otherwise. He did, however, leave his mark at the Leasowes Estate in Halesowen, which he retired to in 1743 to undertake what proved to be the chief work of his life, the beautifying of his property.

Most especially, he embarked on elaborate schemes of landscape gardening, and through his ground-breaking work changed the way people experienced gardens. It brought Leasowes to national attention, but impoverished its owner in the process. He always craved constant admiration of his gardens, while never ceasing to lament his lack of fame as a poet.

West Bromwich Institute is celebrating its 131st year and meets on a Tuesday night at the central library in High Street from 7.30pm.

Award-winning conservation architect Derek Clarke, who helped restore some of the country's most iconic buildings, will be the guest speaker on Tuesday. He will recall his experience of repairing Sir Christopher Wren's Old Royal Naval College at Greenwich.

Pokémon Go players are warned on risk of assault

POLICE have warned people playing Pokémon Go to take care after several players have become victims of attacks by people thinking they were being filmed or photographed.

West Midlands Police Crime Prevention Sergeant, Andy Gregory, said: "Most Pokémon Go related calls we receive are over large groups of people gathering at Poké Stops or other popular game locations and complaints of cars blocking roads, parking on footpaths, or people generally acting anti-socially."

A road near Priory Park in Dudley had to be blocked off after residents complained about hordes of Pokémon followers hunting for the virtual reality creatures in the historic ruins.

Sgt Gregory continued: "We have had a few incidents of people mistakenly believing Pokémon Go players are filming them or taking photographs - one led to an assault and another to a car being damaged."

Snatched

"It is important players are courteous to other members of the public, stay within the law, don't trespass, and do not cause traffic disruption. If offences are committed then people could end up being prosecuted."

They could also end up being victims. Sgt Gregory added: "On one occasion a 17-year-old hunting Pokémon in a Stourbridge park at 10pm had his phone snatched, while a 14-year-old in Small Heath had his brand new iPhone 6 snatched while playing Pokémon Go."

By Doug Wootton

"The normal personal safety advice applies - be aware of your surroundings. We would not advise walking through parks or other remote locations late at night clearly displaying valuable mobile phones. Stay in well-lit places and if you are going out Pokémon hunting, especially children, it's advisable and more fun to go out with friends and not alone."

A Freedom of Information request revealed police attended a Pokémon Go related incident every day over a two-week period in July. The mobile phone-based game involves players 'catching' the creatures using maps of real locations.

Canal festival is a cut above the rest



Alan Keenan, of Rowley Regis, was among those enjoying the Black Country Boating Festival

THOUSANDS flocked to the 31st Black Country Boating Festival at the weekend to enjoy viewing the narrow boats, supping ales and watching live entertainment.

The event along the Dudley Number Two canal line, at Bumble Hole, involved more than 80 boats.

Festival director Paddy Grice said: "It was an excellent weekend. Around 3,000 to 4,000 came on Saturday, which saw some rain, and then 5,000 to 7,000 people on the Sunday."

"We had over 80 narrow boats there, leisure and working. We were joined by four boaters who have attended the festival since it first started 31 years ago."

"We also had 100 charity, community and trade stalls take part. The event was totally run by volunteers. We had both the mayors of Dudley and Sandwell attend."

The boaters, who have attended every event, are Jon and Maggie Jones, Ivor and Marion Chambers, Alan Moore and David and Gill Wheeler. Organisers confirmed the festival will return next September.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bargain hunters cop auction deals

HUNDREDS gathered to bid on around 400 items, all previously stolen or disowned, at a recovered goods police auction at Aston's in Dudley.

Items ranged from bikes to designer handbags. Money raised goes back to the public purse after expenses. Hundreds of internet bidders waded into the action at Baylies Hall, in Tower Street.

A quantity of scrap lead caused a stir in the room, eventually being sold for £270. A signed photo of Hollywood actress Halle Berry went for £15.

Chris Aston, director, said: "The top lots of the day were the lathes that went for £900 and the Ford Focus that sold for £650. They were from a Dudley Council house clearance."

Black Country zombie movie

A HORROR movie partially shot at Dudley Guest Hospital, on Cannock Chase, in Halesowen and Birmingham, is released in cinemas next week.

Zombie thriller The Girl With All The Gifts stars Staffordshire-born Paddy Considine, who was recently seen in Peaky Blinders, Gemma Arterton and Fatal Attraction star Glenn Close. It will hit movie screens across the UK on September 23.

The movie got financial backing from Creative England's West Midlands Production Fund in the biggest investment it has made.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Emergency button in a Dash for the loo

IT HAS long been my belief that the problem with modern technology is that everything we really need has already been invented, and that most new developments are just variations on an old theme.

The MP3 player, for example, is just an updated gramophone. The iPhone is just a souped-up version of what Alexander Graham Bell came up with in 1876.

So hats off to those folk at Amazon who have solved a problem which nobody thought to tackle before: how to buy toilet paper from the comfort of your own bathroom.

Amazon's Dash service means that for £4.99 you can have a device installed in the little boy's room so that when you run out, all you need to do is press a button. Then before you know it, an Andrex multi-pack is winging its way from Rugeley.

Actually, 'before you know it' is an exaggeration. If you live in the wrong postcode, delivery can take up to 24 hours. So probably best to keep a bit in reserve, or it could seem like a very long wait.

Some see this as a marvellous technological breakthrough, the first step towards a fully automated household where everything is available at the touch of a button.

Control

Others view it as the thin end of the wedge, another step towards the day when internet giants know all about our shopping habits and have total control of the market.

Me? I just thought 'I hope they wash their hands first'.

Anyway, my suspicion is that after a bit of initial curiosity, Dash will quickly go the same way as the Amstrad emailer and the Sinclair C5.

Customers will soon realise there is more to life than staying at home waiting for the Andrex to arrive.

□□□

I NEVER really got the point of Great British Bake Off. Surely there are better things to do with your evening than watching people you have never met baking cakes on television.

And I certainly can't understand all the conflicted anger about it being moved from the BBC to Channel 4.

"The BBC has nurtured this programme," said one disgruntled commentator. But that's not really true, is it? Bake Off is made by a private company, and the BBC paid for the right to screen it.

Now, if Channel 4 is willing to pay more, and relieve the licence-payer of the cost, then that's a good deal all round.

As for those devoted fans worried about their favourite series, here is a simple piece of advice. Press the button with a number '4' on it, and the programme will appear.



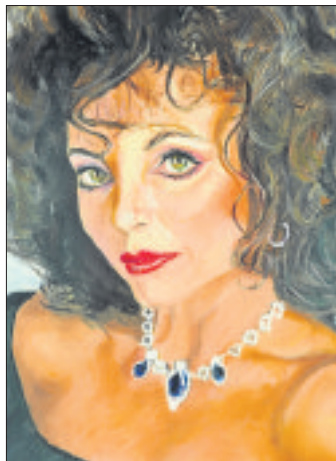
The impish outlook of Sir Terry Wogan



Sir Lenny Henry is among the portraits



David captures smooth 007 Daniel Craig



Joan Collins is every inch the film star

Stars in the frame as artist goes it alone

Celebrity portraits painted by Rugeley artist David Brevitt are on show at Cannock Library. **NATHAN BRIANT reports**

ARTIST David Brevitt is taking his star-studded collection and going it alone for a new exhibition.

The work of the 69-year-old from Rugeley includes portraits of Dudley funnynman Sir Lenny Henry, boxer Floyd Mayweather, film star Joan Collins and the four members of The Rolling Stones, Charlie Watts, Keith Richards, Sir Mick Jagger and Ronnie Wood.

Other paintings include James Bond actor Daniel Craig and comedian and broadcaster Michael Palin.

Mr Brevitt has gone solo for the first time to show off his work, at Cannock Chase Library until September 30, during regular library hours. He has previously featured in other displays in Rugeley and Stafford when fellow artists' work sat alongside his.

Retired

Mr Brevitt started to paint more when he retired as a surveyor six years ago. He said it usually took him a very short time to paint the pictures, typically about two to three days.

He added: "I get fed up if I am working any longer so they need to go down quickly."

Mr Brevitt, of Richardson Way, added: "I developed my ability to paint over many years and now I am retired from work I use the extra time available to improve my technique. I believe my recent paintings are the best I have ever done."

"The paintings in this exhibition are just a



Rugeley artist David Brevitt shows his portrait of the Rolling Stones

sample of my work. I prefer portraits because each one is unique and has to be accurate both in form and colour. I also paint landscapes, animals and still life."

A number of the people in the exhibition have recently died. They included pop star Prince, Terry Wogan and Muhammad Ali.

He said he had chosen to paint these celebrities as a tribute, working from photographs

and painting their image from the snapshot as a 'memento' to their memory and their influence.

Simple

Mr Brevitt said getting his work display at the Manor Avenue venue for the duration of the month was a simple procedure. "I phoned them up and asked them to do it," he said. "I

set them up last Thursday and I have got them here for a whole month. Some come out better than others but they all take the same amount of effort."

Most of the paintings are on sale for £40 but the Rolling Stones' picture is on sale for £80.

For more information on how to get lessons from Mr Brevitt or his exhibition call him on 01889 577150 or email him on hjblb@aol.com

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So, we are all in it together are we...

WHEN David Cameron became Prime Minister he repeated the phrase, "We are all in it together!" I was often mystified and puzzled as to what he meant. Who was the 'we' he referred to? Surely not the general public including an ordinary Joe like me?

His Government pegged pay rises across the public sector at one per cent and told us that Great Britain could not afford more. Was this the meaning of his phrase? That we stand together as services get cut beyond the bone? It has taken a while for me to understand, but now I do.

Before Cameron resigned he gave his aides pay rises of up to 24 per cent. For example, Ameet Gill, former director of strategy, and Liz Sugg, former head of operations at Downing Street, received rises of 23 per cent. Ms Sugg was also honoured with a life peerage. So the 'we' of 'we are all in it together' refers to Cameron and his cronies.

I feel I should mention Mr Narinder Saroop who served in the military and served as a Conservative councillor in Kensington and Chelsea. He has just returned his CBE and stated the reason: 'I wish to do so because of the

cavalier attitude towards the honours system as displayed by Messrs Blair and Cameron bringing it into disrepute. It is the demeaning contempt for it as practised by Blair and Cameron which has led to such disenchantment about an otherwise honourable institution.'

What a principled stance in contrast to the two ex-Prime Ministers he refers to. So, when Cameron said, 'we are all in it together' he did not really mean us at all, but was speaking to his chums.
C STOLL
Halesowen

No point in calling the police

THE police are planning a clamp down on illegal bikers. A few weeks ago there was a crowd of illegal bikers riding through Sedgley through to Coseley.

I phoned for the police and told them exactly what was happening, they hung up. So a few nights ago two stupid idiots - sorry should that be silly boys? - were doing wheelies on quad bikes down the road.

What did I do? Nothing. What is the point? No one will take any notice.

There are so many laws that are difficult to police - driving without seat belts, children not secured in the car, smoking when there are children in the car, using a mobile phone whilst driving, drinking and driving.

So many laws, not enough police out and about.

There used to be a beat bobby who knew what was happening on his/her patch. They have disappeared.

NORMAN D CADDICK
Coseley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
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EMAIL

dudley.chron@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Signs are Brexit is no blow to economy

IF David Taylor thinks he is reading the stock market correctly, he needs to find a new tutor (Letters, September 8).

He is right to say that the FTSE index contains a high proportion of companies that have income in dollars, but the smaller FT250 mainly has companies operating in the domestic market. This market has risen by six per cent since before the Brexit vote.

He also wrote his thoughts before the Purchasing Managers Index, which rose from 47 to 53 in August, which gives further evidence that the economy at the moment is very sound. This index is regarded as a good guide to the state of the UK economy.

He can forget the idea about a further vote on the result - this is not going to happen.

Mr Taylor is amongst a large group of people who cannot accept the result of the referendum.

He needs to accept the decision of 17 million voters and make the best of a decision which they believe is the best option.

ROY SLIMM
Dudley

High price of children's replica strip

IS it just me or is anybody else appalled at the extortionate prices charged for children's replica football strips? This week I bought a Wolves one for my five-year old grandson which set me back a hefty £66. It did include, I must mention, two numbers on the back of the shirt at £4 each!

My criticism is in no way directed particularly at Wolves - of whom our family have been lifelong supporters - but at league and premier clubs in general.

Surely it would eventually be in their own interest to market these kits cheaper, as these kids are their next generation of supporters and should, I would have thought, be given every encouragement?

Quite frankly I don't know how nowadays young 'footie-loving' families manage to keep up with the game's prices in general - and it's a 'working man's game'!

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Sandwell is among worst places to grow up as girl

SANDWELL is one of the top 10 worst places in the country to grow up as a girl, according to new research.

Poverty, teenage pregnancy and low life expectancy were all highlighted as problems facing girls in the borough.

The report, produced by girls' rights charity Plan International UK, compared all local authority areas in England and Wales on childhood poverty, life expectancy, teenage conception rates, GCSE results and the percentage of girls aged under 18 classed as 'NEETs' - not in employment, education or training.

Chance to see academy for engineers

A LAUNCH evening is being held at a new £200,000 training base in Netherton.

LEMA (Lean Engineering and Manufacturing Academy) is opening a new Black Country academy due to the high demand from young people looking to join its engineering and manufacturing apprenticeship programmes and employers in the area looking to recruit its apprentices.

The launch is on Thursday, September 29, from 4.30pm to 7.30pm when there will be a chance to look around the academy in Cinder Bank.

There will be talks and demonstrations from apprentices and staff. To find out more email Linda Doughty via linda.doughty@lemacademy.co.uk or call her on 07794 859733. The academy plans to train 200 young apprentice engineers a year.

LEMA previously operated from Dudley College and the new academy will double the size of LEMA's operations in the borough.

Out of 346 areas, Sandwell was ranked 337th. Wolverhampton, Dudley and Walsall were also in the bottom 50.

According to the report, the biggest problem facing girls in Sandwell is teenage pregnancy, with the borough ranked a lowly 329th compared with other parts of the country. On child poverty, the area was 323rd and was roughly the same in terms of life expectancy at 320th.

Investment

GCSE results and NEETs were higher up the list but still closer to the bottom end of the scale at 283rd.

Wendnesday councillor Elaine Costigan suggested a lack on investment had led to the area's problems. She said: "Sandwell is classed as a deprived area. Maybe we need more money from the Government to do something about it. I know a lot of work has been going on with teenage pregnancy."

"When I was growing up we used to go to youth clubs but we tend to see more boys than girls. These days girls seem to spend more time on their iPads and on social media."

The 10 worst areas to be a girl, according to the report, include Middlesbrough, Blackpool, Manchester, Nottingham, Liverpool, Knowsley, Hastings, Hull, Salford and Sandwell. The best tend to be in Surrey.

Brave Jon runs wild after heart drama



Halesowen's Jon Rowley comes up for air during the Wolf Run in Warwickshire. Picture: PeachySnaps

JUBILANT Jon Rowley has plenty to celebrate after finishing a gruelling 'wild run' that almost killed him.

He 'died' after suffering a cardiac arrest while in training for the event almost four years ago. But the 47-year-old was saved by paramedics who used a defibrillator to restart his heart three times in 90 minutes after his wife had carried out CPR.

The determined stainless steel salesman from Century Way, Halesowen, vowed that one day he would take part one day in The Wolf Run - an award

winning Wild Running event combining mud, trail and obstacle running near Leamington Spa - and finally made it to the start line.

The father-of-one battled through deep mud on the 10km course that included swimming across a lake, scaling walls, clambering over fallen trees and scrambling through a tunnel.

He declared: "It was great. I felt a massive sense of achievement when I finished. I was nervous on the start line. I was particularly worried about the cold water swim."

"My mother was worried sick. She had tried to stop me taking part because of what happened the last time. But I had spent three and a half years preparing for that moment. I trained carefully, taking it one step at a time and not trying to run before I could walk. Now I am as fit as I have ever been."

He recalled how cardiac arrest took him to death's door in November 2012, saying: "I went to bed that night and did not wake up for two and a half weeks. I was in an enforced coma."

Paramedic is struck off for failings

A PARAMEDIC who exposed a teenager to an 'unwarranted risk of harm' by failing to carry appropriate equipment has been struck off the register of health professionals.

Marcus Galligan, employed by West Midlands Ambulance Service as an Emergency Care Practitioner (ECP), was called out to a YMCA to treat a 17-year-old girl who was complaining of breathing difficulties. But he failed to take oxygen, any means of delivering oxygen or any respiratory drugs.

Mr Galligan took only a defibrillator and a thermometer into the premises to treat the patient. A Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Conduct and Competence Committee also found he did not adequately assess the patient, despite recording that he had done so.

Mr Galligan, who attended the hearing and was represented, also assumed the girl was drunk based on an inadequate assessment.

The panel concluded his actions amounted to misconduct and he was struck off the HCPC register.

Panel chair Sarah Baalham said: "By failing to follow the proper procedures, based on Service User A's presentation, he exposed her to an unwarranted risk of harm. Ensuring the availability of appropriate equipment and conducting primary and secondary surveys are fundamental."

Medical director in new health trust role

THE health trust which runs Russell's Hall Hospital has announced the appointment of an acting chief executive following the departure of boss Paula Clark to join Stafford's County Hospital.

Current medical director Paul Harrison will step into the role from October 1. Mr Harrison said: "I look forward to building upon the strong foundations this Trust is well known for."

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COMPETITION

LEGO show anticipation is building up

BRICKLIVE, the UK's biggest LEGO celebration, returns to the NEC, Birmingham building an even bigger show with more LEGO bricks, amazing fan builds and the latest launches.

This year's BRICKLIVE, October 27-30, is set to feature more than 70 of the best amateur builders from around the world displaying their fantastic creations in the Fan Zone – three times the amount on offer in 2015.

One of the biggest builds will be a giant replica of the castle from Disney's Beauty and the Beast, built by Kevin Hall from Brick Galleria. Standing at two metres tall and one-and-a-half metres square at its base, the castle features all the iconic moments from the film including Belle and the Beast dancing on a revolving floor. There will also be more than three mil-

lion LEGO bricks for fans of all ages to build with as well as 'have-a-go' areas where visitors can contribute to bigger builds such as a huge map of the UK waiting to be filled with houses, monuments and iconic landmarks.

The BRICKLIVE stage will showcase new releases and developments in LEGO gaming, give a sneak preview of forthcoming LEGO sets, welcome special guests, and even test the building skills of fans in the popular Brick Off!

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Flying visit as Julie launches art exhibition



Julie Walters pictured with sculptor Luke Perry as she launches the Flying Tales of Folklore exhibition in Smethwick

HARRY Potter and Educating Rita actress Julie Walters showed her 'metal' as she unveiled an exhibition of sculptures created by pupils from her former school.

The film and TV star, who this week features in Channel 4's hard-hitting new drama National Treasure, was back on home turf in Smethwick to cast her eye over an array of metal artworks created by girls from the Youth Quake group.

The girls, who all attend Holly Lodge Primary or Holly Lodge High

School, where Walters went as a child, created the Flying Tales of Folklore exhibition with the help of Cradley Heath sculptor Luke Perry.

The works are on display at the Brasshouse Community Centre and are inspired by famous folk stories and fairytales.

"They are really beautiful," said Julie, aged 66, as she viewed the works. "It's a fabulous idea. It's brilliant what they're doing here."

"The sculptures looks really good and it's a wonderful thing for the community to come and look at as well."

Walters, who attended the event with her sister-in-law Jill, said the

event had allowed her to enjoy a trip down memory lane.

The Billy Elliot star, who is also famous for her comedies with Victoria Wood, said: "It's changed such a lot since I was last here."

"When I was a child it was a really run down area but it looks like it's improving a lot."

"I love coming back to see my grandsons and great nephews. I love just coming back for a good look around as well, this is where I spent my youth."

Walters stars alongside Robbie Coltrane and Andrea Riseborough in National Treasure, a mini-series inspired by Operation Yewtree.

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Choccy Chitty Bang Bang we love you!



Cadbury World chocolatiers Jenny Malenoir, Donna Oluban and Dawn Jenks with the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang cake

HOW'S this for a truly scrumptious creation? Birmingham's Cadbury World have crafted a chocolate Chitty Chitty Bang Bang car to celebrate the arrival of the beloved musical at a city theatre.

The replica of the magical car has been hand-crafted from pure chocolate and took chocolatiers two days to make.

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, based on the 1968 film version of Ian Fleming's book, launched at Birmingham Hippodrome this week. The show runs until Sunday, September 18.

The car is made from a combination

of milk and white chocolate and has been finished with gold, silver and red pearl lustre. It also features a chocolate cloud underneath to show it as if flying through the sky and intricate details of the car body. The creation weighs an impressive 20kg.

It is on display in Birmingham Hippodrome's foyer throughout the duration of the musical.

Cadbury bosses said it was great to celebrate the magic of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

Diane Mitchell, marketing manager at Cadbury World, said: "As one of Birmingham's favourite family attrac-

tions, it only felt right to partner with Birmingham Hippodrome to celebrate the arrival of firm family favourite and world-famous musical, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

"And, what better way to celebrate the show's madness, intrigue and exuberance than through the magic of chocolate!"

Casualty's Lee Mead, Carrie Hope Fletcher, Claire Sweeney and Phill Jupitus star in the musical about the magical racing car that can also float and fly.

● Chitty Chitty Bang Bang review – see page 16

Quote: JGRT

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Jobs at double for twin sisters

TWIN sisters from Cradley Heath are two of the latest young people to benefit from a Sandwell Council scheme to help get young people into jobs and apprenticeships.

Kim and Chloe Gorton, aged 18, are both working as apprentice support workers at Options for Life, a charity supporting adults with learning disabilities.

The sisters are studying for Level 2 NVQs in health and social care. Chloe works at the charity's base in Oldbury and Kim works at the branch in Whiteheath. Kim started her apprenticeship eight months ago and enjoyed it so much, she convinced her sister to join her just eight weeks back. Kim said: "I love it here. We support about 70 people with learning disabilities and it's very rewarding." Chloe added: "Kim was enjoying her apprenticeship so much, I decided to apply and I'm really enjoying it."

To find out more about the Sandwell Guarantee scheme visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/guarantee or call 0121 569 2099.

Got a ring stuck on my finger – for you



Jodi Vincent and fiancé Mark Edwards Pic: Highgate Fire

WHEN firefighter Jodi Vincent was called out to help a man in Birmingham with a ring stuck on his finger she was in for a major surprise. For when she arrived at Grand Central she found herself facing a dilemma – whether to say ‘yes’.

The ‘casualty’ was actually her boyfriend Mark Edwards who immediately got down on one knee to ask for her hand in marriage. Luckily for him, Jodi said yes, cheered on by her colleagues who were in on the ruse which was months in the planning.

Now the happy couple, from Hagley, have been amazed by the support they have received after the proposal was filmed and shared on Twitter. “He did well,” said Jodi. “It was such a shock. I had no idea.”

Her fiancé worked with her colleagues at Highgate Fire Station, in Birmingham, to arrange the surprise, with Jodi thinking she was going to help a man in a sticky situation in a city centre jewellers. The 35-year-old firefighter admitted she was surprised when Mark, a 33-year-old accounts manager, appeared with the engagement ring.

£8m fleet of luxury buses are on the way

A new £8 million fleet of luxurious buses has arrived in the Black Country.

The new ‘Platinum’ National Express West Midlands service boasts comfier seats, more legroom, free 4G wifi and USB points to charge your mobile phone or electronic device.

Forty-six of the new buses will be introduced to the 126 service between Wolverhampton and Birmingham and the X10 service between Merry Hill and Birmingham later in the autumn. The stylish new vehicles already run on the 529 service between Wolverhampton and Walsall

Passengers will also be able to pay using contactless cards when the new technology is rolled out by National Express next year.

Managing Director Peter Coates said: “When the roll-out is finished, these luxurious new buses will be carrying passengers in every district in the Black Country.”

Metro Mayor ‘will wield real power’ says minister

COMMUNITIES secretary Sajid Javid has vowed that the new West Midlands ‘Metro Mayor’ will have the power to enact real change.

Criticism has been levelled at the post, with West Midlands’ Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson labelling it a ‘toothless tiger’ and Labour’s candidate for the role, former MP Sion Simon, saying the position needs beefing up.

However, Mr Javid, MP for Bromsgrove, aid that the metro mayor will wield ‘real power’ and would ‘define what is best for the region’.

Mr Javid highlighted the bid for a new Enterprise Zone in Brierley Hill – which could create 6,000 jobs – as an example of regional cooperation.

He said: “I think these devolution deals are hugely important for local growth. For example Dudley’s bid for an Enterprise Zone requires joined-up thinking – particularly around transport in and out of Birmingham.

“That joined-up thinking only comes when you work together.”

Mr Javid added: “When there is a mayor in places that will mean more leadership across the region. All the mayors, including in the West Midlands, will have power under the new



Sajid Javid – ‘best for region’

Apprentice fund is worrying MP

MP for Dudley North, Ian Austin, has slammed Government proposals to slash apprenticeship funding.

The Government’s Skills Funding Agency has announced potential cuts to funding rates for 16 to 18-year-old apprentices of around 30 per cent.

Mr Austin said he was concerned the cuts could prevent young people in the Black Country from accessing vocational training and careers they want.

He has joined 54 of his Labour colleagues in writing to the Skills Minister Robert Halfon urging him to rethink the cuts and support young people looking to start work. Mr Austin added: “Everyone knows savings have to be made but slashing funding for apprenticeships hits young people that want to work hard and get on. That’s why I’m urging the Government to think again.”

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Country folk flock to fair at Weston Park



Children and adults can experience falconry and other country pursuits at the game fair at Weston Park this weekend

FANS of hunting, shooting, fishing and outdoor pursuits will be flocking to Weston Park this weekend for the 33rd annual Midland Game Fair.

The two-day outdoor show in the grounds of the mansion near Albrighton is Britain's largest countryside-themed event and is set to welcome around 90,000 visitors and 700 exhibitors.

As one of the central focal points of the much-loved show, the crammed Le Chateau Main Arena schedule will include Adams Axemen, the crazy Lamb

National Sheep Race and the Essex Dog Display Team.

There is an array of grand finals in many sporting disciplines and also a comprehensive have-a-go itinerary for the whole family, including Gundog handling, clay shooting, archery, fishing, falconry and ferreting.

Spitfire

A special addition for visitors this year is that on both days they can thrill to a spectacular aerial display by that icon of the Battle of Britain, the Spitfire. Subject to cloud cover, the seven minute display will see the 1944 mark

9 Spitfire perform numerous daredevil manoeuvres including victory rolls, barrel rolls and numerous fly passes over the crowd.

There will be music stages specialising in folk, roots, jazz, blues, Celtic and country, and a food festival, rural crafts, working dog and fishing villages.

The fair opens each day at 8.30am with last entry at 3.30pm. Tickets cost £20 on the day (£18 in advance) and under-16s are free when accompanied by a paying adult. Weekend and camping tickets are available. For further information visit www.midlandgamefair.co.uk or the fair's Facebook page.

Dan sings about things that matter

ALBUMS

by Leon Burakowski

WOLVERHAMPTON singer-songwriter **Dan Whitehouse** broadens his sound to encompass soul and country elements on his **That's Where I Belong** album.

His first for Reveal Records and his fourth album in total since 2012 should hopefully make more music fans aware of this gifted songsmith's heart-felt balladry. Drawing on real life, love and family, the things that matter, his songs connect with people and will be warmly received by those tired of the gimmicks and cynicism of an increasingly stale pop and rock scene.

Opening track **Nothing's Gonna Change It** has a gently funky soul vibe, **Close Up** features harmonies from Jess Morgan and a poignant pedal steel guitar from the great BJ Cole, followed by a title track that is a rocking slice of classic prime Americana.

Work is a hand-clapping fuzzy guitar chugger with a retro 70s feel that celebrates loyalty, **The Little Left Unsaid** is an emotive piano-led ballad and **You Brought The Sunshine** is the kind of muscled folk-rocker that one could imagine Mumford and Co propelling into the stratosphere.

The Places We Have Been is pure modern country floating on a cloud of steel guitar and enhanced by subtle brass. CCC is a soulful rocker and the album closes with the emotive stripped back and sensitive vocal and guitar of **The Left Handed Way**.

Recorded in London, Glasgow and Dudley studios, produced by Chris Clarke and Danny George Wilson of Danny and the Champions of the World, this album find Dan Whitehouse



Wolverhampton singer-songwriter Dan Whitehouse – soul and country influences

appealing to a broad audience without compromising his musical integrity.

The album also includes a bonus CD of a live recording of songs featuring songs from the latest album, the self-titled debut and 2013's **Reaching For A State Of Mind**.

Dan Whitehouse will be in concert with Boo Hewerdine at the Kitchen Garden Cafe in Kings Heath on October 5.

It is evident from **Wild World**, the new album from **Bastille**, that the huge success of their debut **Bad Blood** was no flash in the pan – the irrepressible catchiness of **Good Grief** says that loud and clear. The London outfit defy genre boundaries with their emotional operatic pop. Frontman Dan Smith gives it everything as he expresses his 21st century angst, particularly on the drum 'n' bass propelled **The Currents**.

The album is peppered with dialogue from old movies (remember when **Big Audio Dynamite** did that?), framing songs that have plenty of hooks but also lyrics that reflect unease. More thoughtful than most of their pop peers, they are nearer to Coldplay than

The X Factor wanna-be pop stars. Other highlights include **Warmth**, the Depeche Mode-like **Blame**, the R&B flavoured **Fake It** and the horns and bombast of **Send Them Off**!

Bastille are in concert at the Barclaycard Arena on November 8.

Here, Scottish band **Teenage Fanclub's** first album in six years, finds the 1990s indie favourites in a very good place with songs that exude warmth, positivism and contentment.

The guitar-driven songs are massively melodic and enhanced by laid-back harmony vocals. The feel-good factor is obvious from the get-go with **I'm In Love**. The happy vibe continues on **Hold On**, an arm-round-your-mate anthem, even **The Darkest Part Of The Night** can't conceal a satisfied smile with its catchy Americana style.

Other highlights include **I Have Nothing More To Say** with its gentle psych guitar cycle, **The First Sight** with muted brass fanfare, the chilled **Steady State** and poignant closer **Connected To Life**. **Teenage Fanclub** are in concert at the Birmingham O2 Institute, in Digbeth, on November 28.

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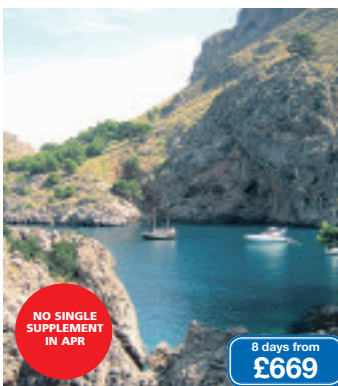
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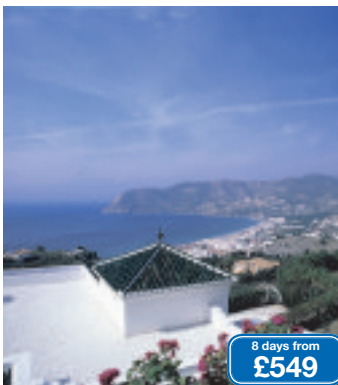
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A Blinding night out was had by all at the museum

IT was a weekend of flat caps and 1920s dresses as a special Peaky Blinders event packed out the Black Country Living Museum.

More than 3,500 poured into the popular attraction last weekend to get a taste of Blinder life and they were not left disappointed, particularly as several scenes in the popular BBC TV gangster drama were filmed at the Tipton Road museum.

The grounds were altered to give the ultimate Peaky Blinders feel, adding to the atmosphere was the attraction's trolley buses, horse and carts, fairground rides, a clothes shop where you could dress like

Tommy Shelby and laser clay pigeon shooting for those who wanted to show they were a good shot.

Its popularity was unquestionable with the Black Country Living Museum selling the event out just hours after tickets went on sale with 1,800 people turning out on Friday night and the same number on Saturday night.

Peaky Blinders creator, the Birmingham writer Stephen Knight, has insisted that much of the fourth series of the worldwide hit show will be filmed at the museum.

● Cillian Murphy interview - see page 18



Peaky Blinder style - Kevin Doughty, Lee Davenport, Mathew Fowler, Scott Robinson and Matthew Waterfield

Sixpence programme has sold for £280

A RARE programme from the 1931 FA Cup final between West Bromwich Albion and Birmingham City has been snapped up at auction in Stourbridge.

The programme sold for £280 to a private collector at Fieldings Auctioneers.

It originally belonged to a HW Johnson, who made cabinets in Brierley Hill, and was passed down to members of his family. However, it remained stored in a box as the descendant was a Wolves fan and so stayed in relatively good condition.

The game was Albion's third FA Cup triumph as they defeated Blues 2-1 in the all-West Midlands affair at Wembley in front of more than 92,000.

Andrew Mayall, from Fieldings, said the programme was attractive to collectors due to its condition and the fact it dated from before the Second World War. The programme originally cost sixpence.

Police face huge bill for Tory conference

A MASSIVE £460,000 of the West Midlands Police budget is having to be spent preparing for the Tory party conference in Birmingham next month.

The conference takes place from October 2 to 5 at the ICC, at Centenary Square, and the cash is coming directly out of the region's public policing purse.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson has slammed the cost considering cuts to the force's budget and believes resources would be better spent on local policing.

He also demanded that the issue is resolved swiftly, or the force could incur a huge bill of around £1.5 million over the next four years.

The cost of policing this year's event is £2.1 million, with the rest coming from elsewhere.

In 2014, the bill for the conference rose to more than £500,000 for West Midlands Police.

Mr Jamieson told of how the budget cuts suffered by the force had been the biggest in the country.

Priority

He said: "I welcome political parties bringing their conferences to the West Midlands as they provide an important boost to the economy. I want to see more conferences, not fewer.

"And the safety of people attending conferences will always be of the highest priority.

"Policing across the region will continue as normal despite extra resources being allocated to the conference.

"The policing taking place during the conference will be paid for but one crucial element will not. For big events like the Conservative Party Conference, a dedicated planning team of 24 officers and staff is required.

"The team from West



Commissioner Jamieson

Midlands Police began work for this year's conference last autumn and is costing approximately £460,000 - that's £460,000 the Home Office will not pay for."

He added: "Significantly, in 2014 when Birmingham last hosted the conference, the costs of this planning team reached £520,000. With Birmingham set to host the Conservative Party Conference again in 2018 and 2020, the next four years could cost the force £1.5m if this issue is not resolved."

West Midlands Police has suffered the largest budget cuts of any force in the country.

"It's been £130million since 2010 and, despite promises to the contrary, West Midlands Police is still receiving cuts of £2.5m a year."

The Police and Crime Commissioner has written to Home Secretary, Amber Rudd MP about the issue.

Raid on radio station

A COMMUNITY radio station in Dudley was broken into with thieves making off with £10,000 worth of broadcasting equipment.

The raid took place at Black Country Radio, in Saltwells Road, overnight on Thursday while a pre-recorded programme was being aired. Mixing desks and amplifiers were amongst the items taken. The damage was discovered by Black Country comedy group The Fizzogs, who had turned up to present their Breakfast Show.

It came less than a week before the station's first birthday, after Black Country Radio launched last September. The station is a merger of 102.5 The Bridge and online station Black Country Community Radio.

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16 Classic goes with a real bang bang

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, September 15, 2016

REVIEWS

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Birmingham Hippodrome

A FINE four fendered friend has returned to the West Midlands in a show that oozes West End quality with its all-singing all-dancing spectacle combined with clever video effects.

The car's the star – the Hippodrome has even got Cadbury's to create a model of it in chocolate.

I don't know how Chitty would do on an emissions test but this is one turbo-charged musical that speeds along in top gear. The only bump in the road came when Chitty failed to unfurl one its wings when it first took off. It seems a stage hand with a spanner and an oil can sorted that out in time for the second act.

Lee Mead is every inch the charismatic leading man as inventor Caractacus Potts while Carrie Hope Fletcher (sister of McFly's Tom Fletcher) lives up to her character's name with a Truly Scrumptious performance. The YouTube sensation has a strong and delightful musical theatre voice.

Both leads and the Potts children, Jeremy and Gemma – on Press night played by Elliot Morris and Darcy Shores – have lots of energy (must be the sugar in all those sweets they took).

The show features the creepiest character to ever feature in a family musical, The Childcatcher, who was heralded on stage by the clever device of having a long pair of arms casting a shadow over the set. Matt Gillet was suitably nightmarish as the white faced ghoul, slithering around in search of kiddiewinks.

Fine support comes from Phill Jupitus, who brings a mischievous sense of fun to Vulgarian ruler Baron Bomburst, while Claire Sweeney shows



Lee Mead and Carrie Hope Fletcher with Aaron Gelkoff and Daisy Riddet

she's still quite a mover in the Bombie Samba as the child-hating, lascivious Baroness Bomburst. We also get an early glimpse of the star pair as they double up roles as confectionary tycoon Lord Scrumptious and his officious personal assistant.

Adding to the giggles are the word-mangling, double-entendre dropping Vulgarian spies Goran and Boris (or Gordon and Doris in English disguise), played by Scott Paige and Sam Harrison.

Andy Hockley is perfect as old sol-

dier Grandpa Potts, particularly in delightfully old fashioned song and dance numbers Posh and The Roses Of Success.

Highlights included the frenetic but well-drilled choreography of Me Ol' Bamboo and the cute but clever Doll On A Music Box song when Caractacus and Truly pose as toy dolls to trick the dastardly Bombursts.

Chitty is a lovely runner in mint condition and continues to go with a bang at the Hippodrome until Sunday.

Leon Burakowski

This Kinks show will really get you going

Sunny Afternoon New Alexandra Theatre Birmingham

IDEALLY, one would choose to watch the matinee of this production, have a couple of pre-show drinks, and literally laze on a Sunny Afternoon. But it matters not, it's compelling viewing.

A fictionalised account of true events, taken from a book by Joe Penhall, it recreates the story of the formative years of 60s legends The Kinks – from Ray and Dave Davies jamming in their bedrooms, their rise to the top with You Really Got Me, the feuds and their ban from the USA.

It moves on to the triumphant summer of '66, England win the World Cup and The Kinks top the charts again with the title track. It ends with their return to the States and hit single Lola.

It's a feel-good tale of the band's highs and lows, topped off with tunes that have stood the test of time.

Mark Newnham is more Dave than Ryan O'Donnell is Ray, looks-wise at least, and had a voice that lent itself to the more rocky tunes. But the latter was still believable as the frontman with Andrew Gallo and Garmon Rhys as band members Mick Avory and Peter Quaife. The accomplished quartet could have easily made up their own tribute act.

You'll be Tired of Waiting for a better musical to come along. It's back in the Midlands at Stoke's Regent Theatre from November 29.

Mark Shipp



Alexandra Burke as Deloris with Jon Robyns and Karen Mann in comedy musical Sister Act

Hallelujah! Soul sister Alexandra is fabulous

Sister Act, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

A-MAZ-ING... director and choreographer Craig Revel Horwood has breathed new life into this Broadway musical based on a 1992 Whoopi Goldberg comedy movie.

In Goldberg's lead role as sinning soul singer Deloris Van Cartier, forced to hide from gangsters in a convent, is Alexandra Burke. She certainly has the X Factor. We knew she could sing, dance and act (her stint in hit show The Bodyguard proved that) but she also shows a knack for comedy as the sassy diva horrified at having to swap her sexy figure-hugging outfits for 'a damn penguin suit'.

She meets her match in Karen Mann's feisty Mother Superior and starts to develop some good habits when she turns the caterwauling chorus of oddball nuns into a heavenly choir of strutting soul sisters.

There is strong support from Jon Robyns as Eddie, a cop with a crush on Deloris who shows that he is a wanna-be John Travolta in disco number I Could Be That Guy. That's an empowerment song matched by

Sarah Goggin as postulant Sister Mary Robert with the powerful The Life I Never Led.

There is a lot of dark and saucy humour in Glenn Slater's lyrics, while Alan Menkon's music pays homage to the 1970s. But Revel Horwood keeps it strictly naughty but nice with lots of broad humour in this feel-good show.

I wasn't sure about his idea of getting the actor-musicians to play instruments on stage but the assorted trumpets, guitars and saxes actually add to the liveliness and immediacy of the show.

For all the silliness, the show has a surprisingly poignant climax as the sisters rally around to protect Deloris from Aaron Lee Lambert's superfly gangster Curtis.

Alexandra Burke sings Fabulous, Baby. She is and so is the show, that's why the audience on Monday gave Sister Act a standing ovation. As the director would say, fab-u-lous darling!

Sister Act continues at the Alex until Saturday. It will also be visiting Wolverhampton and Stoke next year.

Leon Burakowski

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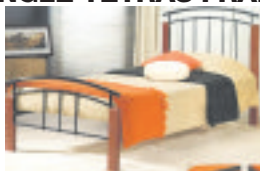
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Livia's Raw Millionaire Bites are a bestseller in Selfridges



Livia's new book reveals many of her recipes for sweet treats which don't make her ill

Life's sweet – without relying on refined sugar

By Kate Whiting

LIFE doesn't get much sweeter than biting into a warm honey cake, fresh from the oven.

But in this kitchen, there's no refined sugar – nor gluten or dairy, for that matter – in sight. This is Livia's – aka Olivia Wollenberg's – kitchen, and she's made her name by baking with more gut-friendly alternatives to the white stuff.

Wollenberg started off baking and selling hundreds of fresh crumbles from her mum's kitchen in North London, and now has a range of Raw Millionaire Bites – her gluten, dairy and refined sugar-free answer to millionaire's shortbread, filled with gooey date caramel – which are a bestseller in Selfridges' Food Hall.

Her honey loaf cake uses raw honey, coconut palm sugar and ground almonds instead of flour, with coconut oil standing in for butter – ingredients which don't make her feel ill when she fancies a treat.

Like her friend Ella Woodward of Deliciously Ella fame (Wollenberg made the 14-layer cake at Woodward's Mustique wedding in April), it was her own health problems that eventually inspired Wollenberg to revolutionise her approach to eating – and then turn it into a business idea.

"I was always the person at three o'clock who would be like, 'I need some chocolate, I need a cupcake'. I think a lot of people feel that – a working day is really long. Even at school, I was excited for my mum to pick me up because I knew she would come with Nutella sandwiches in the car," confesses the 27-year-old, whose naturally sweet recipes are featured in her debut cookbook, Livia's Kitchen.

Sensitive

"I was always just living for food. But my stomach got more and more sensitive. I would go out for dinner with my friends on a Saturday night and never be able to join them at a bar afterwards because I was in so much pain. I didn't want to go and see a doctor because I still wanted to go for pizza, and I was so scared they would say to me, 'You can't eat gluten and dairy any more', so I just put up with it."

In spring 2014, things were so bad that her mum, who she was still living with at the time, told her enough was enough. "She said, 'You're not nourishing your body because what you're eating is just not staying in,'" recalls Wollenberg.

She finally saw a nutritionist, who made her keep a food diary for two weeks.

"She looked at the first two pages and said, 'Just what I thought, you're someone who's going to need to follow a FODMAP diet'. And I was like, 'A FODMAP what?'"

FODMAPs are short-chain carbohydrates that can be poorly absorbed in the small intestine, resulting in IBS-like symptoms for some. Reactions can, of course, vary in severity. Among the worst offenders are onions and garlic, which Wollenberg now avoids entirely – "even a trace can make me really sick".



Honey Loaf Cake is made with ground almonds and coconut oil



Summer Peach Crumble is another of the recipes



Livia's Kitchen by Olivia Wollenberg, Ebury Press

For six weeks, she had to cut out a whole list of possible trigger foods, including apples, with the idea she'd then be able to gradually reintroduce them again.

"Most people can reintroduce 90 per cent of foods and have one or two they cut out. I pretty much couldn't reintroduce anything, except apples."

Although she now says the restricted diet "ruined my life", it also set her on a path to swapping academia (she'd been studying neuroscience at UCL) for entrepreneurship.

"The thing I was most miserable about was having something indulgent and deli-

cious without any gluten, dairy and refined sugar.

"So I started looking at blogs online and people were talking about using natural sugars, like dates, maple syrup, coconut sugar, and them reacting better with their body."

"I just started playing around because I needed a three o'clock pick-me-up. At the time it wasn't a business idea, it was just to keep me going because I was so miserable."

She also realised what she'd thought were healthy options, weren't always the best thing.

"I would have frozen yoghurt instead of ice cream, but frozen yoghurt is crazy high in sugar. I would say to people now, go for a full-fat option if you can eat dairy, just because there's less put in it."

"I also think life's too short to always be thinking how many cubes of sugar are in something. If granola's your favourite thing, just try and eat one which has less sugar in it and you'll be fine," Wollenberg adds.

"Don't limit yourself with things you love."

RECIPES

HONEY LOAF CAKE
Softened coconut oil, for greasing the tin
320g jumbo oats, ground to an oatmeal before using (or 290g ground almonds and 30g buckwheat flour)
250g raw honey
110g coconut palm sugar
75g melted raw coconut oil (odourless)
Juice and zest of 1 big orange
1tbsp grated fresh ginger
1/2tsp ground nutmeg
2tsp ground cinnamon
Preheat oven to 180C/350F/Gas mark 4.

Mix all the ingredients in a mixing bowl with a spoon.

Line a 20cm x 11cm loaf tin with grease-proof paper.

Pour the mixture into the loaf tin. Bake for 35-40 minutes until the top is golden and slightly cracked. The cake will cool as it firms, but there should still be a slightly softer, wetter middle.

SUMMER PEACH CRUMBLE
(Serves 8)
For the filling:
800g stoned and chopped peaches (skins on)

100ml maple syrup
1tsp vanilla powder
For the crumble topping:
200g ground oats (grind jumbo oats to an oatmeal before using) or oat flour
200g jumbo oats
5tbsp melted raw coconut oil
100ml maple syrup
1/8tsp salt
1 1/2tsp vanilla powder
Coconut yoghurt, to serve
Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas mark 4.

Cook the peaches in a saucepan over a medium to low heat with the maple syrup and vanilla powder. Cook for about 20 minutes or until soft.

To a mixing bowl, add the ground oats or oat flour, jumbo oats, coconut oil, maple syrup, salt and vanilla powder and mix thoroughly.

Once the filling is nice and soft, add to an ovenproof dish and top with the crumble mixture.

Bake for 20 minutes until the topping begins to brown.

Serve with a dollop of coconut yoghurt.

Cillian ready to play blinder for right role

CILLIAN Murphy has noticed a shift in his approach in recent years. "I've got a bit more patient in general," he says with a short chuckle.

"The whole nonsense that surrounds the industry, which can be very trying to any sane person wanting to have a normal life. I used to find that very wearing."

Firmly an actor's actor, it's unlikely you'll catch Murphy, who turned 40 in May, ducking in for a selfie with his Dunkirk co-star, Harry Styles, any day soon. Dunkirk is the new Christopher Nolan war film the pair star in which is due out next year.

"It's good to have ambition and hunger and all that, but it's not about being the best, or having the most money or the biggest trailer," he reasons. "It's about trying to really work hard."

Born in Cork, and originally a law student before the lure of playing in a band and ultimately acting came knocking, fulfilling work has always been Murphy's professional guiding star, and not the Hollywood lifestyle that comes with it.

Since his stirring performance in Danny Boyle's 28 Days Later back in 2002, he's more than proved his mettle, immersing himself in roles as diverse as the unnerving Scarecrow in Batman Begins, a passionate IRA freedom fighter in Ken Loach's The Wind That Shakes The Barley and, of course, as intimidating Tommy Shelby in BBC hit Peaky Blinders which has seen the Irish star in the region filming frequently at locations such as the Black Country Living Museum.

After a long spell in London, he's now settled back in Ireland with his artist wife, and their two sons and Labrador puppy.

He says he's constantly asked about career plans – much like the gritty and violent Tommy in the Birmingham, Black Country and London-based gangland drama.

"People always go, 'tell us your strategy'. That's for economists. We don't have a clue what's happening next," says Murphy, looking stylish in a plain button-down blue shirt and jeans, his hair grown back from Tommy Shelby's brutal do. "Genuinely, the whole thing has been chaotic, but you obviously have things you want to do and things you know you won't do – and then life gets in the way and the availability gets in the way. It's entirely random," he says of his own path.

Unpredictability though, is part and parcel of acting. "It's joyous and terrifying and frustrating, but when it works, it's great," he says.

"In terms of work and the people you work with, you want to try and better that. Not knowing if you're going to be able to sustain that level, I worry about that. But you can't control it."

What you can control, he says, is the work you say yes to.

"I'm more choosy about the stuff I do," he admits. "If I'm going to go away from home and leave the family, it's got to be worthwhile, so that is different than when you're a naive, hungry 20-year-old."

Anthropoid, his latest film, which arrived in cinemas last week, more than ticks these boxes.

The thriller tells the true story of a group of men involved in the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, Hitler's third-in-command, whose regime of terror earned him the nickname the 'Butcher of Prague'.

Knowing Heydrich's death would be a huge blow to the Nazis, the men need to act quickly when his schedule is rearranged, all the while knowing the potential deadly consequences for them and their loved ones.

Alongside Fifty Shades Of Grey star Jamie Dornan, who plays Jan Kubis, Murphy stars as Slovak Josef Gabčík, a fellow soldier from the Czech Army in exile, who is parachuted with Kubis into occupied Czechoslovakia in 1941.

"You get to spend time with the characters. You're actually invested in them. War films work when you can see yourself in that position, and you say to your partner or whoever you're going to see it with, 'what would you do if you were in that situation?'"

Directed by Sean Ellis, the film doesn't shy away from depicting the brutality and torture that featured in Heydrich's regime, something Murphy believes is necessary.

"I hope and I believe that this film doesn't in any way glorify or make it gratuitous in any way, but it's important to show that these people lived besides this all the time," he says.

A fourth series of Peaky Blinders is planned.



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Thursday, 7pm
Art Gallery, Wolverhampton
The satirical musician from The Now Show brings his Don't Believe A Word tour to the city's gallery in Lichfield Street in a bid to debunk myths and expose nonsense. Visit www.wolvlescivic.co.uk

The Importance Of Being Earnest



until September 24, various times
Birmingham Repertory Theatre
Cathy Tyson (above) stars as the formidable Lady Bracknell in Nikolai Foster's new production of Oscar Wilde's witty satire on Victorian society. Visit www.birmingham-rep.co.uk

Haley Reinhart



Monday, 7.30pm
Glee Club, Birmingham
The rising American jazz singer comes to the Arcadian Centre venue on her first UK tour after making a name for herself online with vintage versions of songs such as Radiohead's Creep. www.glee.co.uk/music/birmingham

SOUL, BLUES, JAZZ MOTOWN & REGGAE

Babajack plus the Black and Blues Band
Tonight,
Rhayader Museum and Gallery, LD6 5ER.
Call 01597 810561

80s and 90s Boogie Night
Tonight,
The Belfry Hotel & Resort,
Wishaw, Sutton Coldfield,
B76 9PR.
Call 0844 980 0600

Stars From The Commitments
Tonight, £17.50
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
SY3 8FT. Call 01743 281281

Caribbean Reggae Cookout
Sun,
Newman Brothers at the Coffin Works, Birmingham, B3 1JP.
Call 0121 2334790

Soul City – Public Performance
Sun, £5
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

Haley Reinhart
Mon,
Glee Club Birmingham,
The arcadian Center, B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

Alexander O'Neal
Wed, £18
The Jam House, Birmingham,
B31QU.
Call 0121 200 3030

FESTIVALS

Merefest
Tomorrow,
Shropshire Wildlife Trust,
Shrewsbury, SY2 6AH.
Call 01743 284280

CLUBBING

Propaganda
Tonight,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

4 Years of ONEDUB at The Rainbow Venues
Tonight,
The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B12 0LD.
Call 0121 753 1818

Pure Speedgarage & Bassline One Off Special
Tonight - tomorrow,
Nightingale Club, Birmingham,
B5 6RD. Call 0121 622 1718

Little Helpers Official Label Party with Flashmob plus more
Tomorrow,
The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B12 0LD.
Call 0121 753 1818

Soup Roof Garden Closing Party
Sonny Fodera at The Rainbow Venues
Tomorrow,
The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B12 0LD.
Call 0121 753 1818

ROCK & METAL

The Festivals Experience
Tonight, £8
The River Rooms, Stourbridge,
DY8 1JN.
Call 01384 397 177
or 07986 577 661

Small Fakers – Small Faces Tribute
Tonight, £7 - £8
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

The World Famous Elvis Show
Tonight, £19.50
Solihull Arts Complex,
Central Library, B91 3RG.
Call 0121 704 6962

Big Country – The Seer – 30th Anniversary Tour
Tonight, £20 - £22.50
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Fred Zeppelin
Tomorrow,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

The Phonics + support
Tomorrow, £7
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

The Move
Tomorrow, £20
Solihull Arts Complex,
Central Library, B91 3RG.
Call 0121 704 6962

Leon Hendrix Golden Anniversary Tour
Sun, £12 - £14
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

RollKings Stones Fest: Celebration of The Rolling Stones
Sun,
Fletchers, Kings Heath,
Birmingham, B14 7SA.
Call 0121 443 4725

McFly – Show One & Show Two
Wed - Thu,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

CLASSICAL

The Fortunes
Tonight, £18
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
SY3 8FT. Call 01743 281281

Traditional Music Session
Sun,
The Prince of Wales Moseley,
Birmingham, B13 8EE.
Call 0121 4494198

Traditional Irish Music
Mon,
The Spotted Dog, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B12 0NH.
Call 0121 772 3822

POP

Kick Up The 80s
Tomorrow, £8
The River Rooms, Stourbridge,
DY8 1JN.
Call 01384 397 177
or 07986 577 661

Asha Bhosle: Farewell Tour
Tomorrow,
Genting Arena,
Birmingham, B40 1NT.
Call 0121 780 4141

Daniel O'Donnell
Tue, £39.50 - £42.50
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

FOLK, COUNTRY & ACOUSTIC

Sean Taylor Plays Black Park Chapel Chirk
Tomorrow,
Black Park Chapel, Maes-Y-Parc,
LL14 5BB.
Call 01691 778800

The Queens Of Country Show
Tomorrow, £19.50
Huntingdon Hall,
CrownGate Shopping Centre,
Worcester, WR1 3LD.
Call 01905 611427

Johnny Cash Roadshow
Tomorrow, £23.52
Malvern Theatres, WR14 3HB.
Call 01684 892277

COMEDY

Comedy 42 – September
Tonight,
Lichfield Garrick, WS13 6HR.
Call 01543 412121

The Importance Of Being Earnest
Tonight - Thu,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,
B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Gary Delaney: There's Something About Gary
Tomorrow, £15
Atrix, Bromsgrove, B60 1PQ.
Call 01527 577330

TAPE FACE
Sun, £16
Solihull Arts Complex,
Central Library, B91 3RG.
Call 0121 704 6962

Charles Ross' One Man Star Wars
Sun,
The Slade Rooms,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP.
Call 01902 552122

Bazaar and Rummage
Today - tomorrow, £10 - £16
Malvern Theatres, WR14 3HB.
Call 01684 892277

Mitch Benn
Thu, 7pm
Wolverhampton Art Gallery,
WV1 1DU.
Call 01902 552055

THEATRE

Sister Act
Tonight - tomorrow,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Tomorrow, £13 - £15
Ludlow Assembly Rooms, SY8 1AZ.
Call 01584 873229

Ghost
Mon - Thu,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

The Lady In The Van
Today - tomorrow,
The Crescent Theatre,
Brindleyplace, Birmingham,
B16 8AE.
Call 0121 643 5858

One Show More
Today - Thu, £14 - £16
Fenton Manor Sports Complex,
Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2RR.
Call 01782 233222

MISC. EVENTS

Digbeth Dining Clubs: The British Street Food Festival 2016 at The Rainbow Venues
Tomorrow,
The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B12 0LD.
Call 0121 753 1818

The Multidimensional Show
Tomorrow,
All Saints Centre,
Wolverhampton, WV2 1EL.
Call 0121 443 4579

Family fun at Sarehole Mill with live music, streetfood, food & craft market and beer
Sun,
Sarehole Mill, Birmingham, B13 0BD.
Call 0121 348 8160

Psychic Evening with Debs
Thu,
Zen Birmingham,
B13 8HW.
Call 0121 449 4995
or 0121 643 3933

60+ Strength & Balance Class
Today,
Areley Kings Village Hall,
Areley Common,
Stourport-on-Severn, DY13 0NB.
Call 07939 318973

Tech Wednesday
Wed,
Innovation Birmingham Campus,
Faraday Wharf, Birmingham, B7 4BB.
Call 0121 260 6000

ARTS & CULTURE

Caroline Jariwala – Mosaics
Today - Thu,
Winterbourne House and Garden,
University of Birmingham, B15 2TT.
Call 0121 414 3003

Distinctly Décopatch
Today,
Creative Coffee Hub,
Birmingham, B29 6HJ.
Call 01215 727300

Open Cockpits Evening
Tonight - tomorrow,
RAF Museum Cosford, Shifnal, TF11 8UP.
Call 0208 205 2266
or 01902 376 200

Cold Calling: The Arctic Project
Today,
CBSO Centre, Birmingham, B1 2LF.
Call 0121 616 6500

The Art Of Slowing Down
Today,
Creative Coffee Hub,
Birmingham, B29 6HJ.
Call 01215 727300

Introduction to pole lathe turning
Today,
Brockhampton Estate,
Grooms Brockhampton Mews,
Brockhampton Park, Brington, WR6 5TB.
Call 01885 488099

Cronkhill open day
Today,
Attingham Park, Shrewsbury, SY4 4TW.
Call 01743 708123

Jewellery Quarter Heritage Walk
Tomorrow, £5
Museum of the Jewellery Quarter,
Birmingham, B18 6HA.
Call 0121 554 3598

Bedfas at the Barber
The Barber Institute of Fine Arts,
University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, B15 2TS.
Call 0121 414 7333

Free Lantern Making Workshop
Tomorrow, free
Oriol Davies Gallery, The Park, Newtown, SY16 2NZ.
Call 01686 625041

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Opera version of Mandela life story

FROM tribal initiation on the banks of the Mbashe River, through the heady jazz-fuelled days in Sophiatown, to incarceration on Robben Island and finally to freedom – the story of Nelson Mandela will be brought to Birmingham Hippodrome in the Mandela Trilogy.

The theatre will feature the story of one of the world's most iconic leaders on Tuesday and Wednesday when the amazing life of Mandela is brought to the stage by Cape Town Opera.

Told in three parts by a cast and orchestra of more than 60 South African performers, the music matches the different phases of Mandela's journey from law student to freedom fighter to first President of South Africa.

The upbeat swing-influenced songs of Sophiatown are framed by musical styles more familiar in contemporary opera, plus a dash of Xhosa folk music that grounds the production in its African roots.

The show was created by Michael Williams, the show's director, librettist and the managing director of Cape Town Opera.

He said: "It came about when we were contemplating 2010 with the World Cup coming to South Africa. The question was what piece of work should we create as an opera company to showcase the talents of our company and to speak to visitors about South Africa? It seemed pretty obvious it had to be about Mandela and how we prevented a civil war.

"I mean what a life, right? How do you tackle that? It's a whole life and



A scene from the Mandela Trilogy by Cape Town Opera, coming to Birmingham

you just have 70 minutes then an interval before another 60 minutes. In that short time, the challenge is to try to create a piece of art that is stimulating."

The piece took Michael a year-and-a-half to write and it was subsequently revised following initial

productions, adding an extra year to the creative process.

"The Trilogy now belongs to the cast and company, they've claimed it as their own," he added. "The greatest words that Mandela said were that the purpose of freedom is to give it to others. That's his legacy."

Ghost role for Sarah

GIRLS Aloud star Sarah Harding is due to play Molly Jensen in Ghost The Musical when the stage version of the romantic 1990 movie comes to Birmingham next week.

The Bill Kenwright produced musical will star Sarah in the Demi Moore role alongside Andy Moss, who plays Rhys Ashworth in Hollyoaks, in the Patrick Swayze role as her murdered lover Sam.

The Stockport-raised singer found fame via TV talent show Popstars: The Rivals in 2002, and her acting career has included appearances in the movie St Trinians 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold and Coronation Street. Earlier this year she had to pull out of TV winter sports show The Jump after rupturing a leg ligament.

In her first stage role, Sarah is starring in the touring version of the West End musical by Bruce Joel Rubin with original music and lyrics by Dave Stewart (ex-Eurythmics) and Glen Ballard. The film's most iconic scene, when potter Molly is joined at the wheel by her ghostly lover, was famously performed to the Righteous Brothers' classic Unchained Melody, which also features in the musical.

For over ten years Sarah Harding was part of one of the most successful pop acts in UK history, Girls Aloud, with 20 consecutive top ten singles, including four number ones.

Sarah said: "I'm absolutely delighted to be making my theatre debut in Ghost The Musical. The film is one of my all-time favourites, so to get the opportunity to play Molly in Bill Kenwright's new production is a huge honour for me."

Joining her on stage is Andy Moss as Sam. He is best-known for starring as Rhys Ashworth in Channel 4's Hollyoaks. His other credits include Cutting It, Coronation Street and he most recently he appeared as Paul Cuthbert in Doctors.

Ghost The Musical is staged at the New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday.



'The film is one of my favourites'

Cold calling at Rep for world premiere

A NEW work that focuses on the future of the Arctic will have its world premiere at Birmingham Repertory Theatre tomorrow (Friday) and Saturday.

The Rep and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra present Cold Calling: The Arctic Project. It has been composed by Nick Powell and written and directed by Anthony Neilson. It will fuse film, an original score and dialogue in the Rep's Studio auditorium. This production will be performed by a 20-piece chamber orchestra alongside actors Jan Pearson (Doctors) and Waleed Akhtar (Salmon Fishing in the Yemen) against the backdrop of Arctic landscapes.

The Wonder Stuff call in Fuzzbox

THE Wonder Stuff have announced final special guests for their Christmas shows, including a West Midlands homecoming concert on December 23 at Birmingham's O2 Institute.

The glittering line up will see Miles Hunt and co joined by Brummie girl group Fuzzbox, who exploded onto the scene in a cloud of lipstick and lace 30 years ago with hits International Rescue and Pink Sunshine. The gig in Brum already includes Bentley Rhythm Ace and compere Janice Long.

The Wonder Stuff this year celebrated their 30th anniversary with eighth studio album 30 Goes Around The Sun.

Voice of Rock has new solo album

CANNOCK-BORN rock singer Glenn Hughes, formerly of Trapeze, Deep Purple and Black Country Communion, releases his 12th solo album, Resonate, on November 4.

Four days after that California-based Glenn, nicknamed 'The Voice of Rock', starts his UK and European tour at The Assembly in Leamington Spa before his homecoming gig at Wolverhampton's Wulfrun Hall on November 9.

His special guests are Living Colour, the US funk metal band led by Vernon Reid. They had a 1988 US hit with Cult of Personality and 1990 UK hit with Love Rears Its Ugly Head.

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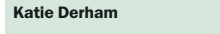
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DIGITAL



Katie Derham presents as the two remaining amateur orchestras are sent off to boot camp, where professional musicians put them through their paces ahead of the grand final. Series judge Paul Daniel delivers one last masterclass, and mentor Chi-Chi Nwanoku offers more expert mentoring. With only two weeks remaining before the big play-off, the ensembles return to their home-towns, where the performers struggle to balance extra practice sessions with their work and family commitments. Finally, after months of fine-tuning and rehearsals, the rival groups do musical battle at the Royal Albert Hall.

11.50 NFL This Week. (R)
12.20 Weather for the Week Ahead.
12.25 BBC News.

11.25 Film: A Serious Man. (2009) The Coen brothers' 1960s-set black comedy, starring Michael Stuhlbarg and Richard Kind.

1.05 Film: The Quatermass Xperiment. (1955) **2.25** This Is BBC Two.

1.05 Jackpot247. **3.00** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

1.00 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **1.50** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. James tries to make peace with John Paul. (R) **3.55** Location, Location, Location. (R) **4.50** Food Unwrapped. (R) **5.20** Come Dine with Me. (R)

10.30 Impractical Jokers UK. David, Matt, Lee and Paul play a round of "Touch the Stranger", and the boys challenge each other to deliver ridiculous lectures to the unsuspecting members of a focus

12.00 New Girl **12.30** The Goldbergs
2.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine **3.30** The Big

*Please note: evening meal is not available on Winter Wonderland break

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

A Sunday Horse, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A determined horse rider strives to become a success in the sport, despite limited resources for training. Her career is seemingly ended by a near fatal accident, but she resolves to recover from her injuries and make a comeback. Fact-based drama, starring Nikki Reed, Linda Hamilton and William Shatner. (2015)

TUESDAY

Good Witch, Bad Witch, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Cassandra Nightingale receives a visit from her conniving niece, who turns her friends against her. Drama sequel, starring Catherine Bell, Sarah Power and Matthew Knight. (2011)

WEDNESDAY

Before the Devil Knows You're Dead, Channel 4, 1.05am

Two brothers are both in need of money. The elder suggests robbing their parents' jewellery store, as they know their way around the security, and insurance will cover what they steal – but their seemingly perfect crime ends in tragedy. Crime drama, starring Philip Seymour Hoffman and Ethan Hawke. (2007)



Girl with a Pearl Earring, Friday, BBC1, 11.40pm

THURSDAY

Final Recourse, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A wealthy businesswoman spirals into substance abuse, and, in the haze of a drunken stupor, she is kidnapped. Held in a makeshift prison by her captors, she goes through the agony of drug and alcohol withdrawal, before managing to escape and return home. It's only then, however, that she realises someone close to home may have been behind her abduction. Thriller, starring Teri Polo. (2013)

FRIDAY

Girl with a Pearl Earring, BBC1, 11.40pm

A girl takes up the job of maid in the household of the artist Vermeer – but her presence provokes friction in the family and the jealousy of his wife when the servant catches the painter's eye. Peter Webber's 17th-century period drama adapted from the best-selling novel by Tracy Chevalier, starring Scarlett Johansson, Colin Firth and Tom Wilkinson. (2003)

Accusation turns comic's life into a nightmare

The term 'national treasure' is bandied around a lot these days – it seems to be applied to anyone who has been on TV at any point in the past 50 years – but Robbie Coltrane is arguably more deserving of the status than most.

The Bafta-winning actor has appeared in everything from Cracker to the Harry Potter movies, and now he's back in this highly anticipated, and very topical four-part drama Nation Treasure, playing the (fictional) much-loved comedian Paul Finchley.

Robbie explains: "He's been part of a double act that's been going for 30-odd years who, in their younger days, were incredibly successful. They had their own TV show and did sketches. And they are both kind of viewed as national treasures – they're kind of like Morecambe and Wise or any of those other double acts that people love."

However, Paul could be about to experience a very public fall from grace when he is accused of a historical sexual offence that dates back to the 1990s. He denies ever having met the woman making the

allegation, but his wife Marie (another national treasure contender, Julie Walters) has to decide whether to stand by him, and his troubled daughter Dee (Andrea Riseborough) starts to question her relationship with him.

Coltrane adds: "The first episode, I think, is very interesting, because there's no hint in it at all of whether he did it or not. And also, whether he did it or not is not what it's about. It's about 'What would it be like if it happened to you, or anybody else.'"

And Paul's situation becomes more difficult when the media gets involved, which leads to one of the dilemmas at the heart of the series (and the real-life cases which have helped to inspire it) – does naming suspects lead to trial in the court of public opinion, or is it a way of encouraging victims to come forward?

As Robbie says, there are no easy answers: "In the programme, my character does this interview with Victoria Derbyshire... Finchley's argument is 'Why does this have to be done in public?' And she says 'Well, what do you think? Should the law be

protecting the wrongfully accused, or those who have actually been abused? Because that's your choice.' And it is the choice. It's a real moral dilemma."

In fact, the subject matter is so controversial, it seems some people were surprised the actor signed up for it all. He says: "I got this script and I thought 'Oh yes! A lot of people said 'Don't touch it, Rob, it's poisonous, it's not going to do you any good.' It's pretend!"

But just because the case is fictional, it doesn't mean that National Treasure doesn't have a lot to say. Robbie says: "I believe with all my soul that it's the job of drama to deal with things that the judiciary's not very good at, the police aren't very good at, the politicians aren't very good at, the civil service aren't very good at..."

"A lot of people said that about Cracker. 'Why would you want to make an entertaining show about people getting murdered?' It's not about entertainment, it's about finding out how people get like that. That's what the whole show is about."



Robbie Coltrane stars in National Treasure, Tuesday, Channel 4, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Cold Feet

ITV, 9pm

David and Robyn are woken in the early hours by the police and David immediately assumes the worst, thinking something has happened to one of the children. A visit to the doctor confirms Adam's suspicions about Pete, and an adrenaline-fuelled bike ride fails to take Pete's mind off the situation. A visit to see care patient Harry (James Bolam) adds to Pete's woes when Harry makes a morose request.

TUESDAY

DIY SOS: The Big Build

BBC1, 9pm

The Rio Paralympics may have only just come to a close, but the DIY SOS team is looking to Tokyo 2020 as they come to the aid of disabled teenage athlete Scott Jones in Cheltenham. The 17-year-old already knows what it's like to be a world champion – he picked up a gold at the 2013 IPC world championships. Nick Knowles and the team aim to help Scott achieve another ambition and become more self-sufficient at home, something the current layout of the house makes challenging. Will a side and rear extension, complete with a bedroom, wet room, access to an adapted kitchen and a state-of-the-art gym help Scott on the road to independence (and Tokyo)?

WEDNESDAY

Grand Designs

Channel 4, 9pm

Kevin McCloud is back for a new series, and he begins by meeting a couple who have taken on a project that's hugely ambitious, even by Grand Designs standards. Plumber Jon Martin and ceramicist Noreen Jaafar have acquired an overgrown, neglected half acre of land in the heart of a Gloucestershire town. The fact that its home to 27 protected trees would put off many developers, but for the couple it was all part of the attraction as they intend to build a modern tree house. The property will be set up in the branches, with stilts screwed into the earth and balconies that provide spectacular views.

THURSDAY

George Clarke's Amazing Spaces

Channel 4, 8pm

New series. The architect is back with the show that celebrates ingenious and eccentric small builds in all their forms. He meets a pair of newlyweds who instead of a honeymoon spent their money on an old army truck,

which they plan to transform into a mobile holiday home, and a master craftsman in Devon making an eco-friendly luxury treehouse – complete with sauna, spiral staircase and even a slide. In New Zealand, George visits a hilltop beach house overlooking the Pacific, and as ever he and old friend Will Hardie embark on another series-long project – this time to build a gravity-defying, rotating home inspired by vintage sci-fi comics.

Hunted

Channel 4, 9pm

Last Autumn, 14 civilians (described as fugitives) took part in Hunted, a series in which they attempted to steer clear of former police intelligence officers for 28 days – four of them made it through the series without being caught. It was an unusual format, but one that kept viewers hooked as they witnessed the real-life tensions and terrors of being on the run



Strictly Come Dancing, Friday, BBC1, 9pm

– so it should come as no surprise to find that the show is back for a new run. This time only 10 people will be taking part, but the stakes are high – those who remain at large after four gruelling weeks will win £100,000, but they will certainly have earned the money. They'll be going up against an elite team of 30 hunters led by former Scotland Yard detective Peter Bleksley. Among those taking part are a househusband, countryside lovers from Yorkshire and a pair of amputee military veterans.

FRIDAY

Joanna Lumley's Japan

ITV, 9pm

So far, the Ab Fab star's journey around Japan has seen her taking in a mix of old and new, and the final instalment is no exception. Joanna begins by traveling to the island of Shikoku, where she hopes to gain a better understanding of Japanese Buddhism, before heading to the fourth of the country's main islands, Kyushu, for a stay in the world's first robot hotel. From there, she travels south to Nagasaki, the site of the second atomic bomb to be dropped on Japan in 1945. She visits Shiroyama Elementary school, which was close to the bomb's hyper centre, and hears how former student Matsuyoshi Ikeda miraculously survived the blast.

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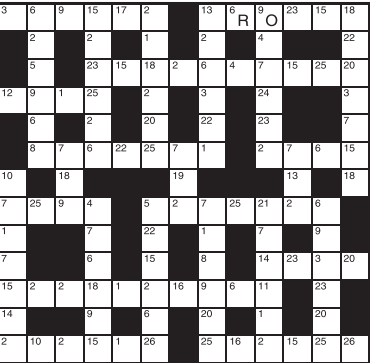
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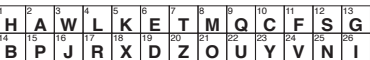
BRAIN GYM No.395

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:



Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

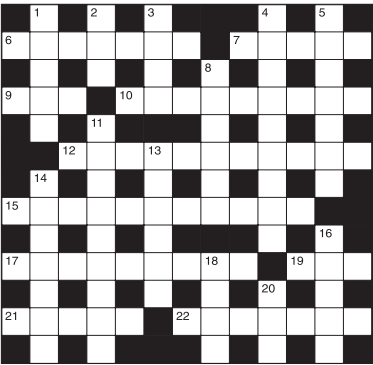
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 6. Ranchers intimidate the youngsters (7)
- 7. It's an atrocious mark (5)
- 9. The very end of the dump (3)
- 10. Where connections are established - for stockmen? (9)
- 12. Footman (11)
- 15. Where the yachting enthusiast may be found in tent! (5,6)
- 17. The shout of one on becoming engaged! (6-3)
- 19. 20Dn & 1Dn. Dan noticing mixed drink (3,3,5)
- 21. Turkish governor elected once more (5)
- 22. He reckons it's a piece of shop equipment (7)

Down

- 1. See 19 Across
- 2 & 16Dn. They result in current falls (3-5)
- 3. A sharp-eyed one to make connections, we hear (4)
- 4. So affected that notes fade dreadfully (5-4)
- 5. In disorganised side the main complaint (7)
- 8. He composed in Munich - Op.1, naturally! (6)
- 11. I fetch in a different leader (9)
- 13. The noise of a bat (6)
- 14. Blow up the picture and cause general confusion (7)
- 16. See 2 Down
- 18. A revolting occurrence (4)
- 20. See 19 Across



Quick Clues:

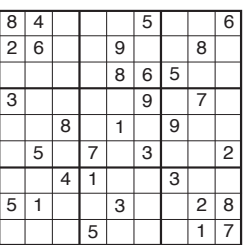
Across

- 6. Chorus (7)
- 7. Journal (5)
- 9. Strike (3)
- 10. Homage (9)
- 12. Seemingly absurd (11)
- 15. Make a start (5,3,3)
- 17. Insulted (9)
- 19. Beam (3)
- 21. Send (5)
- 22. Make (7)

Down

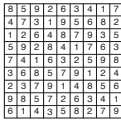
- 1. Start (5)
- 2. Arrid (3)
- 3. Magnitude (4)
- 4. Chronometer (9)
- 5. Decisive (7)
- 8. Take away (6)
- 11. Clumsy (9)
- 13. Be there (6)
- 14. Tender (7)
- 16. Imagine (5)
- 18. Merit (4)
- 20. Lyric poem (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >



LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Trial and error; 8 Manifest; 9 Even; 10 Elcher; 12 Easily; 14 Meing; 16 Stream; 18 News; 20 Sideral; 22 Pitched battle. Down: 1 Break the; 2 Lavish; 3 Take; 4 Editress; 5 Orders; 6 Sole; 11 Register; 13 Loanable; 15 Insect; 17 Rarity; 19 Emit; 21 Debt. QUICK - Across: 7 Come to nothing; 8 Pick-me-up; 9 Idea; 10 Cherub; 12 Seldom; 14 Tragic; 16 Deride; 18 Mail; 20 Becoming; 22 Fair and square. Down: 1 Polisher; 2 Pecker; 3 Sore; 4 Composed; 5 Thrill; 6 Once; 11 Backbone; 13 Ordinary; 15 Galore; 17 Rumour; 19 Away; 21 Cost.

Quiz

- 1. What was the name of MGM's lion?
- 2. Who resigned as Protector a year after succeeding Oliver Cromwell?
- 3. Which fruit is obtained from the tree Ficus carica?
- 4. With which art form is Frederick Ashton associated?
- 5. Where are the Sussex Stakes run?
- 6. With whom did Karl Marx collaborate on The Communist Manifesto?
- 7. In which year was the Jarrow Crusade?
- 8. Of what is pinchbeck an imitation?
- 9. In which country was Salman Rushdie born?
- 10. What was poet Gerard Manley Hopkins's other calling?

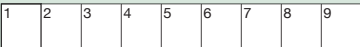
Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Denmark; 2 Universal; 3 Pierre-Auguste Renoir; 4 Knapweed; 5 Silver; 6 Parrots; 7 Tea; 8 Gerry Adams; 9 Soar; 10 Belgium and the Netherlands. Niner: IMPORTUNE

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

422 gives a girl's name,
84154 gives a second girl's name,
73669 gives a third girl's name.



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Absolutely delicious dish – smoked chicken



A taste of the Orient – the China Diner



Small and simple – inside is understated and laidback



Honey chilli crispy beef in a noodle bowl

Proper fine China at Diner that spares all the airs and graces

YOU'RE always eating posh stuff from posh places," says Angry from Wellington.

"Why don't you go to proper places, the ones that we can all go to, and review those?"

I'm not quite sure what a proper place is. But I'm guessing Angry From Wellington is referring to neighbourhood restaurants that serve food that doesn't require a Masters Degree from the University of Gastronomy to understand.

I'm pretty sure he's referring to the sort of place that you don't have to book months in advance or hire a suit to go to. And the China Diner is all of those things.

Chow Mein? Tick. Egg fried rice? Tick. Sizzling chicken in fresh chilli, garlic and black bean sauce with onions and mushrooms? Oh go on then, if you're asking.

By Andy Richardson

China Diner is the epitome of a 'proper restaurant'. It's not posh. And that's one of the things that's great about it. There are no airs and graces, no pretence and the smiles are as wide as the moon.

The bubbly lady who served my midweek supper was a star. Polite, warm and engaging she made regular visits to the table to make sure the food and drinks were fine – and when there was food left over at the end of the evening she bagged it up in takeaway containers and told me to enjoy it the night after. I did. That's what I call 'proper'.

China Diner is in Bridgnorth's Low Town. It's in an unprepossessing building with a waiting area for takeaway customers on the ground floor, alongside a bar.

The restaurant is upstairs and it's bijou. With tables packed closely together, there's

nothing fancy or plush about it. It's not quite spit and sawdust, but it's as far removed from fine dining as a jam sandwich is from haute cuisine.

And that's one of the reasons it's so good. China Diner is about two things: well-cooked food and delightful service. I loved it the first time I visited and it's just as good two years on.

Thrilling

Dinner was delicious. The last time I ate at China Diner, every table was taken. This time, none were. I had the place to myself for most of the evening, though the takeaway downstairs was busy all night.

I started with a smoked chicken number. Small pieces of lightly smoked breast were served in a crisp batter alongside chilli, garlic, onion and spring onions. It was delicious. The chicken might have been smoked

a little longer, to impart a stronger flavour, though the batter was as good as anything Rick Stein might come up with. Mains were thrilling.

A Kung Po chicken was the star of the show. Tender pieces of chicken fillet were encased in a smooth and delicious spicy/sweet sauce with pieces of fresh chilli, a sprinkling of cashew nuts, sweet onions, garlic and crunchy water chestnuts.

Shredded crispy beef in honey chilli sauce was utterly beguiling and a spicy Mandarin chicken also made its way to the table, offering a rich, fruity complement to its table-fellows.

There wasn't room for dessert, which was a pity because China Diner offers more than the bog-standard bought-in-frozen-offerings so beloved by competitors. No matter. There'll be a next time. I'm sure Angry from Wellington would love this place.



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Five-bed individual style self-build property

Built in the 1970s, 6b Prospect Road, Lower Gornal, is a five-bedroomed individual style self-build, which is generally described as a split-level bungalow or a house.

It is for sale through Swinscoes at £244,950.

Full of charm and character, the property's split-level accommodation has the living

LOWER GORNAL

£244,950

space including a lounge, kitchen, shower room and a reception room on the first floor and has four further bedrooms downstairs.

There are well laid out and low maintenance gardens to the rear and

stretching to the side of the property. It also has a balcony overlooking the garden.

The selling agents are stressing that this property really needs to be viewed in order to be fully appreciated.

Contact Swinscoes on 01902 672274 or visit www.swinscoes.co.uk



Character just shines through this improved family home

WOODSETTON

£350,000

<<<

An impressive traditional detached home in Tipton Road, Woodsetton has been significantly improved and enhanced.

Still retaining lots of character, it is for sale through Wakeman at £350,000 with no chain.

It has a porch, entrance hall, dining room, living room, conservatory, enlarged breakfast kitchen, three first floor bedrooms, second floor attic bedroom four, a bathroom, gardens, garage, WC and parking.

The home is packed with high quality fittings and many fine features.

There is ample parking and a large garage.

Contact Wakeman on 01384 459999 or visit www.wakeman-online.com

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PEDMORE, Stevens Road £1,350 pcm+Fees
A beautiful well presented detached 4 double bedroom family home in this very popular & convenient location in Pedmore. Accommodation comprises: Reception hall, well equipped kitchen with Range Master Cooker, front reception with doors opening to rear dining room with french door access to a lovely mature private garden. On the first floor there are 4 bedrooms and a family bathroom with separate shower. Outside there is parking to the front with garage, gas central



CRADLEY HEATH, Waterfall Lane £795 pcm+Fees
A stunning extending semi detached cottage style home, located in a sought after area and close to Old Hill Train Station. Featuring 3 good size bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, a beautiful modern kitchen, modern bathroom with a "P" shaped bath and shower, lovely rear garden with access to a garage which is for storage only, and a drive for 2/3 cars. EPC: TBC



SUTTON COLDFIELD, Hartopp Court £800 pcm+Fees
A delightful ground floor 2 bedroom apartment with an en-suite to master. The property has excellent links to Birmingham City Centre, being located a short walk from the railway station, is gas centrally heated and double glazed and is located in a gated complex with secure allocated parking. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Summerfields Avenue £775 pcm+Fees
A superb 3 bedroom refurbished semi-detached house comprising of: entrance hall, 2 reception rooms, beautiful kitchen, 2 double & 1 single bedrooms, house bathroom with separate shower, rear garden & driveway for 1 car and a garage, this family home offers a very long rental opportunity. EPC: D



AMBLESCOTE, High Street £775 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a home on a select development 'Crystal Gardens'. This home features a spacious lounge/dining area, well appointed kitchen, downstairs WC, the 1st floor has 2 bedrooms & a family bathroom & on the 2nd floor there is a master bedroom with a large en-suite, 2 allocated parking spaces, front & rear gardens. This property will not be available for long. Minimum contract 12 months. EPC: B



HALESOWEN, Summerfields Avenue £750 pcm+Fees
Located in the ever popular area of Hurst Green, is this semi-detached house, finished to a high standard, comprising 3 bedrooms, modern fitted kitchen, modern bathroom with shower, very large lounge, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden, driveway parking and garage, unfurnished. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Springfield Drive £695 pcm+Fees
With easy access to both Halesowen and Blackheath Town Centre and the M5. This 3 bed semi detached house features 2 good size reception rooms, large kitchen, house bathroom with shower, downstairs wc, garage with driveway parking, front & rear gardens. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Wassell Road £675 pcm+Fees
A large unfurnished semi-detached house in central Halesowen which features: entrance porch, lounge, fully fitted kitchen, covered side entrance, private rear garden, 3 good size bedrooms, large bathroom with shower over bath & driveway. Also benefiting from gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Clifton Road £625 pcm+Fees
A property not to be missed! Set within a quiet cul-de-sac, this immaculate semi detached property, comprising of: 2 double bedrooms, good sized lounge, modern kitchen, house bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, driveway parking for 2 cars, well maintained rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, George Road £595 pcm+Fees
Located in a sought after area of Halesowen. This lovely 2 bed terraced property with off road parking features a large lounge, fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms, white bathroom suite and shower, off road parking and a good size rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Holt Road £575 pcm+Fees
Minutes away from Rowley Regis Train Station, not far from the M5 J2 and Blackheath Town Centre. A nicely presented refurbished mid terraced home. Featuring 2 double bedrooms and 1 single bedroom, 2 spacious reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, downstairs bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, small rear garden, on road parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Hammersley Close £535 pcm+Fees
Located in a nice quiet cul-de-sac on the Homer Hill Estate. Just down the road from Colley Lane Primary School and buses to Halesowen and Cradley Heath. This unfurnished modern terraced house features 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, spacious lounge, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, driveway for 2 cars, rear garden. Viewing highly recommended. EPC: C



KIDDERMINSTER, Patin House £500 pcm+Fees
You'll love this charming 1st floor apartment set in a converted Victorian house offering you fully central heating, an open plan lounge giving you generous space to move about, fitted kitchen with appliances and granite worktops, large bathroom with shower, 1 bedroom, allocated parking and well kept communal gardens. Situated in a friendly community. This property is available immediately. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Richmond Court £475 pcm+Fees
A unfurnished 1 bed 1st floor apartment close to Halesowen Town Centre and bus links. Featuring kitchen with integrated appliances, living room, lovely modern shower room, electric storage heating and on road parking. This property is close to Huntingtree Park and a few minutes drive to Halesowen Town. EPC: D



ROWLEY REGIS, Winchester Close £475 pcm+Fees
A well presented, unfurnished ground floor apartment, close to the M5 J2. This apartment features 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, lounge, double glazing, bathroom with shower, parking space and parking area for visitors, communal gardens. EPC: D



NETHERTON, Mousesweet Lane £450 pcm+Fees
A modern style furnished to suit ground floor apartment in superbly convenient location in a quiet cul-de-sac featuring: entrance hallway, lounge with electric fire, fitted kitchen with appliances, 1 double bedroom, bathroom suite with shower, rear access to private courtyard, driveway for 2 cars, gas central heating, double glazing. EPC: D



STOURBRIDGE, Stamberrill House £425 pcm+Fees
COMING SOON!! Fully refurbished apartments within a stone's throw of Stourbridge Town Centre and on the number 9 bus route. This stunning 1 bedroom apartment on the ground floor features an open plan lounge/fitted kitchen, shower room, 1 double bedroom & private rear parking. Not to be missed! EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Clifton Street £425 pcm+Fees
A stunning part furnished apartment set in the Old Quarter of Stourbridge. Ideal for the town centre and transport links. The apartment is on the 1st floor and features a great size lounge, modern kitchen, bathroom with shower, 1 double bedroom, double glazing and electric heating, on road parking. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Somers Road £395 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished ground floor flat close to Halesowen Town Centre. Featuring gas central heating, living room, fitted kitchen, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, on road parking and a rear garden. EPC: TBC



DUDLEY, Greystone Passage £395 pcm+Fees
A recently redecorated 1st floor flat within walking distance to Dudley Town Centre. Featuring kitchen, 1 bedroom, bathroom with shower, Garden, off road parking, unfurnished. This property must be seen and not missed. EPC: E



PENSNETT, St Marks Court £395 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished ground floor flat, close to Russells Hall Hospital, briefly comprising of: electric storage heating, living room, fitted kitchen, double bedroom, bathroom with shower, communal garden, allocated parking space. EPC: TBC

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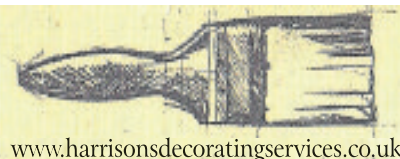
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Established 24 years

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Including: • Tree Lopping • Hedge Cutting
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• Low Maintenance Landscaping • Gardens Cleared
FULLY INSURED • OAP DISCOUNTS

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- All garden work undertaken
- Hedges and lawns cut
- General tidy and rubbish removed
- Garden landscaping and fencing work

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All types of General Repairs to your home and garden
Also interior and exterior decorating
Local Friendly Service
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No Job Too Small

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ALL WEATHER ROOFING

Slating, Tiling, New Roofs, Flat Roofs, Chimneys, Guttering, Ridges, Flashings, uPVC Fascia Cladding
FREE ESTIMATES • FAST RELIABLE SERVICE
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allweatherroofingwestmids.co.uk

allweatherroofinguk@outlook.com

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One of the Leading Roofing Companies
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- Gutters Cleaned From £15
- Small Repairs From £15
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on all UPVC Fascias, Gutters, New Roofs/Slate Tile & Felt and Garage Roofs
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Mobile: 07584 081228

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UNBEATABLE PRICES

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Ceramic, porcelain, mosaics, slate, marble and all natural stone.

FULL BATHROOM INSTALLATION AVAILABLE

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2

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3

Post to...
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Classified Ads

Buy Local, Sell Local

Index

- 1 Family
- 2 Leisure Time
- 3 Home & Services
- 4 Pets & Animals
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- 6 Property
- 7 Jobs
- 8 Motoring
- 9 Local Information
- 10 Personals

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For items up to £250

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8.30am - 5.30pm Mon - Fri.
Closed Sat/Sun and Bank Holidays

Online

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At your local Express & Star Office.
Cancel/amend, call before 3.00pm
Monday - Friday for the next day's
advertisement or also before 3.00pm
Friday for Monday's advertisement.

funeral directors

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(Blackheath) Ltd

Independent
family run
Funeral Directors
24 hour service
Halesowen
0121 422 2794
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lost & found

MISSING SLIM TABBY
Definite sitting in Crowther
Road, Newbridge. Very
scared, won't come to owner.
Much loved and missed.
Reward leading to safe
return.
Call Steve on 07847 510705.

Family

elderly & disabled

MOBILITY SCOOTERS from £350
can deliver, servicing available.
Call: Powerlink, Blackheath 01384
255019 / 07831 246292.

ROLLATOR, little used.
£30.
01902 336070.

WREKIN STAIRLIFTS recondi-
tioned lifts from £799. New avail-
able. 01952 405397/07897 273617

Leisure Time

caravans / motorhomes

A BEAUTIFUL PARK NR LUDLOW
Caravans 35x12 DG & CH from
£15,000. 11 month holiday season.
01584823433. www.bcpark.co.uk

BK CONTESSA
Bluebird, 2003, Static, 26ft x
12ft Caravan, 2 bedroom, 6-
berth, sighted close near to the
river in Worcester.
Very good condition.
£8,500 ovno. 01691 659071 or
07583 629907.

CARAVAN AWNING Quest
Blenheim, full caravan awning, size
12, used twice, £400.
07775 943051. Dudley area.

TALBOT HIGHWAYMAN camper,
1988, 4-berth, 88k, long MOT,
clean and tidy, four new tyres.
£3,495 ovno. 07988 173668.

TUDOR AMBASSADOR
Static caravan with decking
area, 1094 model located at
Hampton Lodge, 35ft x 12ft
2 bed.
Residential site open all year.
£13,000 ovno.
Call David 07514 505818.

caravans wanted

WANTED ALL CARAVANS
Any age or condition
Also motorhomes wanted.
TOP PRICES PAID
Immediate collection.
CALL THOMAS
07717 280 996

CARAVAN WANTED Cash on pick
up asap.
Call me on 07717 090817.

TOURING CARAVAN WANTED.
no objection to work, anything
considered. Please telephone
0980 365757.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your adver-
tisement today? We would respect-
fully remind advertisers that it is
their responsibility to inform the
publishers of any mistakes or in-
accuracies on the first day of publica-
tion.

music shop

TECHNICS CABINET
Contains tuner, tape deck,
Sony amp, Philips CD player.
Also Technics microphone and 2
separate speakers, all dated
but working fine.
£50.
01902 659116.

Home & Services

furniture

BFC FURNITURE

Open Everyday
10am-6pm
OPEN SUNDAY
10AM-4PM
SAVE 50%
DIRECT FROM
FACTORY

Divan beds from £49. Mattresses
from £29. Ortho mats from £69.
Memory foam mats £78. Metal
fashion bed frames - singles £49,
doubles £69. Bunk bed frames £99.
Choose from our unrivalled stocks
of Mobility Chairs in leather and
fabric - many models to choose
from - saving up to 50% on Roberto lift
and tilt in leather. Was £899
HALF PRICE £349

BFC FACTORY OUTLET
CONVEYOR ROAD IND EST,
GREAT BRIDGE RD, TIVTON DV4 8XF.
OFF A461 2 MINS FROM NEW
B560 JCT A1030 TONY CARVER
0121 657 6935
BIG CHOICE OF DINING FURNITURE

BROWN CORDUROY 3 piece suite,
8 months old, excellent condition,
£400 ono. 01384 348971.



CHESTERFIELD
3 seater and 2 seater colour
Oxblood. Brand New real top
leather in the box never been
used must sell less than half the
price. £1,250 can deliver.
Call 01384 858866
Mobile 0734 274 6919



CONSERVATORY 2 1/2
SEATER CANE SETTEE

and one chair, modern 2014
design, excellent condition,
down sizing forces reluctant
sale.
£400 ono.
07963 452723.

THREE PIECE suite, 2-seater
settee, 2 armchairs, dusky pink,
excellent, £400 ono 01902 336070.

household appliances

FRIDGE FREEZER in excellent
condition.
£85. 07493 919511.

items wanted

ALL GOLD 9CT £300 PER OUNCE
CASH PAID TODAY
A GENUINE LADY BUTLER
All Bewick • Doulton • Worcester Maercroft
• Lladro • Old coins
• WATCHES • COSTUME JEWELLERY
• Diamonds and Gold Coins • Clocks • Paintings
• ALL SILVER • All Oriental Items
Pre-47 silver coins All war medals etc
ANYTHING OLD & INTERESTING
01922 495066 or 07971 783206

A BEST CASH PRICE



FOR ALL RAILWAY
COLLECTIONS
Any gauge or age

Hornby / Bachmann / Bowmans
/ Roundhouse / Graham / Farsh
/ any live steam. Also Die Cast,
Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.
01384 836219 or 07891 713547.
thetrainmaster67@
hotmail.com

AIR RIFLES, SHOT
GUNS ANTIQUE GUNS.
TAXIDERM. BIG BORE
GUNS, TRAPS ETC WANTED.
07968 624202

NEW/USED, Modern/vintage per-
fumes, eg Dior and Chanel and fur
coats wanted.
Jane, 07716 371694.

READERS ARE ADVISED to care-
fully consider all of their options
before agreeing to the sale of any of
their items.

RECORDS WANTED
50's, 60's, 70's, Rock, Punk,
Rock / Roll, Jazz / 90's Indie.
Collections bought.
Music Memorabilia, Promo
Posters, autographs, etc, etc.
Top prices paid.
Telephone 0766 252439.

items for sale

BED LINEN including duvets and
duvet sets. Call for prices. 01902
530138 or 07764 315766.

HONDA EU INVERTER 1/0, sold in
good condition, £450 ono.
01902 661945.

SINGLE MARLEY garage for sale,
18ft x 10ft, £750, o.n.o. Can deliver.
07572 936150.

TEMPUR CLOUDS mattress and
two Tempur Clouds pillows Blue-
cross from Dreams (perfect) un-
wanted, £300ono 01384 354821

specialists at your service

aerials

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BUY LOCAL, SELL LOCAL



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I am very pleased
with the response
I get from my
Classified
Advertising
Contract

Steve -
AA Digital Aerials

FOR GREAT BUSINESS
RESULTS CALL
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Brought to you by Express & Star

AA DIGITAL AERIALS
AERIALS FITTED FROM £75
WE'LL BEAT ANY QUOTE
Work Guaranteed
01902 858191
01384 429166
01543 439095
01922 716029
07833 738857

alarms/security

PREMIER ALARMS

Supplied and Fitted £195
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

building services

DAVIES & SON BUILDERS
Over 35 years experience in the industry
All aspects of building work including:
Extensions, loft conversions, roofing,
driveways & landscaping.
Discounts offered.
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A CLASS CARPET & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING
OAP discount. Recession Prices.
Unbeatable Value: Rooms cleaned from £10
Call Paul 07870 341089

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IT WORKS FOR ME

"I am really
pleased
with the
response
I get from my
Classified
Advertising!"

Paul Westwood

FOR GREAT BUSINESS RESULTS CALL
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Brought to you by Express & Star

external rendering / insulation

50% OF ALL EXTERNAL RENDER-
ING, small jobs no problem, fully
guaranteed 07891 920567

fencing

PORTWAY FENCING
SPECIAL OFFER
10 bays of quality fencing,
concrete posts, gravel boards, £695
HEAVY DUTY PANELS SUPPLIED AND FITTED
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656
Mon - Fri 9am - 4.30pm
Sat 8am - 12noon
83 Portway Rd, Wbury
www.portwayfencing.co.uk
DELIVERY AVAILABLE

gardening services

GARDENS TIDIED from £5 per
garden. 25 years experience. Call
01902 713106 / 07813 184086.

gas fitting

READERS ARE ADVISED
To check that anyone
carrying out any Gas work
is Gas Safe Registered.
It is an offence under the Gas
Safety (Installation and Use)
Regulations 1998 to carry out
gas work in the UK without
being on the Gas Safe Register.

house clearances

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid
for house clearances and bereave-
ments. Also removals undertaken.
07852 172641 / 07710 360327

painters / decorators

DECORATOR
ALL domestic work
undertaken
Reliable & Affordable
Special rates for OAPs
No job too SMALL
Call
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M & S PLASTERING & BUILDING
Services. Home/Garden Improve-
ments. Mark or Sara 07741 770997

removals

KT REMOVALS
12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on
07771 727119

A MAN WITH A VAN Single items,
flat/house removals/clearances,
local/nationwide. Call Steve 0121
422 2999 or 07815 043724

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your
Removal needs. 07429 453099/
01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

CALL PETE - MAN WITH A VAN.
Removals, clearances, large/small.
01902 741546, 07899 635852.

roofing

MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof
repairs, fascias and gutters. Call
01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

skip hire

BLITZ SKIPS
AFFORDABLE SKIPS
2-50 YARD SKIPS AVAILABLE
MON-SAT 7AM-6PM
01902 870370
0121 517 1111

Classified Ads
BUY LOCAL, SELL LOCAL



IT WORKS FOR ME

Thanks to our
Classified advertising
in the Express & Star
we are really busy!
It definitely
works for us!

Grinsells Skip Hire.

FOR GREAT BUSINESS RESULTS CALL
01902 319 191

Brought to you by Express & Star

4 Pets & Animals

equestrian corner

ALL READERS are advised to
check if Horses have the required
Passport information.

guns & dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that
they meet all necessary legal
requirements for owning and
using guns.

pets corner

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when
purchasing a puppy there are
some simple guidelines you can
follow to ensure that you are not
purchasing from a Puppy
Farmer.

1. Try to ensure you visit the
puppy whilst it is still with it's
Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a
puppy from any other location
than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any
KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News
Association publications take
great care to avoid publication
of advertisements from Puppy
Farmers we cannot accept any
liability should readers
purchase from this kind of
establishment.

KITTENS for sale, 8 weeks old, all
female, black and white and all
black. £40. 07765 652167.
POND FISH approx 20-25, small and
large, must collect, moving house.
£30 the lot. 07787 705689.

SHIH TZU cross Chihuahua
puppies, 2 boys, 2 girls, long black
and white fluffy fur, weaned,
wormed and chipped. Ready Sep
24, £350 each. Deposit secures.
01384 76385. 07792 607828.

TWO EIGHT week old black sister
kittens, go together, £80 the pair.
07734 006263.

vets

Express & Star

THIS SPACE
COULD BE
PROMOTING
YOUR
BUSINESS

Every day our
customers get a
great response
from Classified
Advertising.

So could you by
calling our friendly
experienced Sales
Advisors on
01902 319191.

5 Business & Farming

business
opportunities

READERS are recommended to
take appropriate professional
advice before entering any obli-
gations.

6 Property

accommodation
to let

A TWO BED FLAT off Compton Rd,
CH. DG. Off road parking, £115.50
pw 01902 340073 / 07770 660636.

NOTICE TO READERS It is an
offence under the Accommodation
Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency
to charge a fee simply for the regis-
tration of your requirements and/or
supplying particulars of premises to
let.

DUDLEY Clean, furnished bedsit
with own bath/kitchen, £87 p/w, for
mature DSS. 07550 002549.

SMART ROOMS in shared house.
Netherton, from £85 pwk Single,
£95 pwk DBL inc bills. No DSS.
07970 717139 or 07940 116130.

THREE BEDROOM house, Bilston,
CH. DG. £575pw.
07852 525618.

WOLVERHAMPTON self contained
one bedroom ground floor flat. DG.
CH. 07800 838257.

accommodation
wanted

60 YEAR OLD male, requires 1 bed
flat, for very long term, employed,
with small dog/clean/house trained,
Wton area only. 07714 268850

overseas
property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek
independent legal advice before
entering into any financial commit-
ments.

Free Ads
IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY
For items up to £250.
Online at
bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

properties wanted

EVERY TIME!

WE PAY 100% of purchase price



We buy any house

- FAMILY BUSINESS
- FAST FRIENDLY SERVICE
- COMPLETION TO SUIT YOU
- NO FEES/FREE SOLICITORS

WE ALSO BUY LAND

30 yrs

0800 999 999 6

or 01902 628047 24/7 www.black-countryhomes.co.uk

ClassifiedAds BUY LOCAL, SELL LOCAL



IT WORKS FOR ME

We have been advertising in the Express & Star and Chronicles for over 20 years and consider it a key part of our business with the regular flow of calls, which our advertising generates.

Black Country Homes

FOR GREAT BUSINESS RESULTS CALL 01902 319 191

Brought to you by Express & Star

Need to sell your home fast?

We can help you make a fresh start

With solutions to suit you can clear your debts and make a fresh start

Purchase Agreed Within 7 DAYS

ALL CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERED
COMPLETE ON DATE TO SUIT
FREE VALUATION AND LEGALS
FREE FRIENDLY ADVICE
LOCAL COMPANY

MARION | PROPERTY SOLUTIONS

WHY NOT CALL US TODAY

0121 405 0797

*Terms and Conditions apply OUR LINES ARE OPEN 24/7

Home Cash Buyer

Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish

£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££

Houses / Land Required

Ring Paul 24/7 Local 07870 341 089

Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154
Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901
www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

ClassifiedAds

BUY LOCAL, SELL LOCAL



IT WORKS FOR ME

"I am really pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising!"

Paul Westwood - Home Cash Buyer

FOR GREAT BUSINESS RESULTS CALL 01902 319 191

Brought to you by Express & Star

WE NAILED IT!



Classified Advertising Works!

To advertise your business call 01902 319 191

8

Motoring

cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED

that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

FIAT PUNTO 1.2, 11 months MoT, alloys wheels, low mileage, electric windows, good condition, £695. Telephone 07754 557861.

FORD FIESTA 08, 3-dr, 69,000 miles, MoT July 17, petrol, very good condition, front windows Elec, a/c, CL, £1,400. 07838 897643.

FORD FOCUS ZETEC 05 Reg, blue, 2 previous owners, 97,000 miles, part service history, 2 keys, HPI report, MoT'd, excellent condition. £1,000 o.n.o. 07443 510220.

FORD KA 2008 MoT history, 56,000 genuine miles, drives, looks great, EW, pas, CL, £1,200. 07449 431723.

FORD KA Studio 1.3, red, 57 reg, 25,000 miles, FSH plus 12 months MoT, immaculate, £1,295. 01902 755525.

FORD KA Style, 2008, 65,000 miles, 1 previous owner, EW, AC, EM, burnt orange colour, excellent £1,495 ono. 07799 420194.

FORD STREETKA Luxury 1.6, convertible, 2004, silver, Long MoT, new parts, good condition, £800 ono. 01384 258713.

full time - general

P&T POWER TRANSMISSIONS MIDLANDS LTD.

EXPERIENCED MANUAL COMMERCIAL GEARBOX BUILDER

(Salary depending on experience)
Must be experienced in all areas of refurbishing
Varied variety of gearboxes to build to high standard
Based in Birmingham

Please send your CV to
trudy@powertransmissions.uk.com
or Tel: 0121 773 9931



MNA Media

IT SUPPORT TECHNICIAN

Midland News Association, publisher of the Express & Star and Shropshire Star, is at the forefront of newspaper and digital media technologies. They are constantly looking at embracing new technologies to improve its business and become more efficient.

There is a rare opportunity for an IT Support Technician within the MNA technical support team, the successful candidate will have a willingness to work under pressure and work unsociable hours on a continental style shift basis.

A wide range of technologies are currently, and projected to be employed, these include but are not limited to: Local and Wide Area Networking, Linux, Microsoft Active Directory, Windows Server and Desktop, Sybase, Google Apps for Business, Mysql and MSSQL. The ideal candidate may not necessarily have experience in all these technologies but should have knowledge of Server, Desktop and Network Technology. The candidate should have an understanding of the Windows domain environment, have creative problem-solving skills. They will be expected to respond to and prioritise incoming requests promptly and professionally, working with all levels and varying positions of staff.

Whilst this is a demanding role it is also a rewarding one, being a part of bringing local newspapers and digital content to its readers each day.

Applications including a full CV should be sent to: hr@mnamedia.co.uk

Closing date for applications: 30th September 2016

Owners of Express & Star Ltd and Shropshire Newspapers Ltd

Express & Star STAR

PEUGEOT 1400 HDI, 53reg, 67,000 miles, long MoT, good condition throughout, any trial, £695. 01785 714840 / 07531 193354.

PEUGEOT 206 Estate, 03 reg, 76k, recent service, new cambelt, water pump and tyres, good inside/out £900 ono. 0121 3574940.

PEUGEOT 206 SW, 04 diesel Estate, red, 12 months MoT, only 3 former keepers, bargain £625 ono. 07708 034039.

PEUGEOT 307 HDI Rapier, 5Dr, silver, MoT, CD, good condition/runner, £500 o.n.o. 07511 749321.

RENAULT CLIO Dynamique, diesel, 02, SR, long MoT, 70mpg, £20 tax, lovely condition, £500. 07514 711600.

TOYOTA MR2 CONVERTIBLE Roadster, 2001, 101,188 miles, MoT July 2017, £1,000. Telephone 07796 828908.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi, 04 reg, 5-dr, low miles, 12 months MoT, CL CD player, EW, EM, £995 ono. 07722 411100.

VOLVO ESTATE 1996, auto, petrol, MoT, leather, alloys, CL, £395. 07950 398750.

VW GOLF GTI, 2001, blue, long MoT, many new parts, alloy wheels, AC, sun roof, £500. 07549 871679.

cars over £1500

SELLING YOUR CAR?

We have a package to suit every budget.
Packages start from as little as
£21.00 for 6 nights Plus
6 nights free if you do not sell.

CALL 01902 317878

FORD FOCUS Convertible, 2.0cc, 09 reg, MoT'd, service history, low miles, red, very good condition, £3,995 ono. 07968 804035.

PRESTIGE

MERCEDES SL350 AUTOMATIC, CONVERTIBLE

54 reg, 72,000 miles, FSH, Obsidian Black, with cream leather, power hood, panoramic glass roof, anti roll bar wind deflector, alloys, sat nav, Xenon lights, 2 keys, Absolutely pristine.

£9,999.

07836 204450.

deolsuk@hotmail.co.uk
MERCEDES-BENZ ML270, high spec, good condition, full MoT, 140,000 miles, service history, 2.7 diesel, £2,500 ono. 07881 757703.

PEUGEOT 107 URBAN 2009, 5dr hatchback, 11 months MoT, EW, CL, immaculate condition, £200pa tax, £2,350. 07742 904992.

VAUXHALL CORSA 2010, 1.2 petrol, 5dr, silver, 10 months MoT, 34,000 miles, drives like new, £2,895. 07944 422732.

VAUXHALL TIGRA 1.4 Exclusive, 09, leather interior, heated seats, MoT, alloys, low miles, £3,500 ono. 07407 439768. 0121 530 9905.

classic cars

PONTIAC GRAND AM 2dr coupe, 1988, white, left hand drive, nice condition, economical, £2,950. 01902 747180 / 07748 898968.

WANTED, CLASSIC CARS. Private cash buyer. instant cash settlement. Any age. Any condition. 01630 535953 or 0773 462797.

commercial vehicles

CITROEN BERLINGO VAN diesel, 1.6, 57 plate, £1,100, o.n.o. 07817 396628.

driving tuition

Homer's
10 Hours £39! Five Hours £50!
2 Hours £20! All Areas Covered
AD/POI REQUIRED. Gift vouchers available for £10
07432 458160 / 01562 870650
01384 234954 / 0121 5640990
01902 580065 www.homersdrivingschool.co.uk

motorbikes

HONDA CBR600, T reg, full MoT, only 16,000 genuine miles, recent service, excellent condition, red & white, £1,800 ono. 07943 120733.

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

MCB
TOP PRICES PAID FOR ALL SCRAP CARS, VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS
Tel: 01902 408176
1000's of parts available at all times
MONMOUTH RD, WV1 2TZ

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Korando has edge to win

By John Griffiths

Korean car maker SsangYong is gearing up to take on the increasingly strong competition in the sports utility market.

After the success of its popular Tivoli – now joined by a new estate version – the company has unveiled an upgraded version of its Korando.

With highly competitive prices, a new engine, five year/unlimited mileage warranty and the ability to serve as family transport or a tough workhorse, the new new Korando ELX is capable of driving up the company's UK sales.

Prices run from £15,995 to £22,495 – the latter for the flagship four wheel drive, auto transmission test vehicle.

Where it scores over many of today's compact SUV rivals (where the SUV is often a style statement for cars never meant to stray from the straight and narrow), the ELX has the ability to rough it and a best in class towing ability (up to two tonnes for a braked trailer).

The Korando is a good-looking car, and its introduction signalled Ssangyong's intention to up its game when it came to meeting the demands of British car buyers. For a start, it was the company's first monocoque-built model, which significantly improved its handling and comfort to more car-like standards than the old body on ladder frame vehicles.

It was further upgraded two years ago and now sees the introduction of a larger (2.2 from 2 litres) turbo diesel with increased power and torque (178PS and a hefty 400Nm).

Powering up for a car like this isn't about tackling the traffic lights grand prix. It means the car runs at lower revs so it's smoother, quieter, more economical and more responsive, all positive benefits.

It's far from sluggish (0 to 62mph in either 9.9 seconds with either manual or auto transmission). Official economy figures are 53.3mpg and 139g/km of CO2 for the manual, 41.5mpg and 177g/km of CO2 for the auto.

The six-speed auto is smooth and responsive and there's a manual override too, using a (to me) much easier to use thumb switch on the gear knob rather than today's floppy paddles.

You probably won't need it in normal driving anyway, but it could come into its own if you venture off-road for finer control.

Forays

The Korando has a 'torque on demand' four wheel drive system where the rear pair free wheel until those at the front start to slip. It also has a diff lock, though, for more challenging off-road forays.

Boot space is a good 486 litres, rising to 1,312 litres with both rear seats folded forward.

The rear seats provided plenty of head and leg room for six-footers, and the seat-backs recline so they can relax on longer journeys.

As the flagship of the Korando fleet, the ELX has an upgraded interior with less of the hard plastic surfaces of previous models and more gloss black and chrome effect trimmings.

It is well-equipped for its price, with a central colour touch screen for the audio and satnav systems, leather upholstery (front and



.....
At the top-of-the-range the ELX could well prove attractive to the caravan or horsey set
.....

rear seats are heated), electrically adjustable driver's seat, automatic air conditioning, rear parking sensors, cruise control, trip computer, electric tailgate release and speed-sensitive automatic door locks.

Front, side and curtain airbags and a range of electronic safety and stability systems are also part of the package.

Every car needs an edge to succeed

and the Korando has it in terms of value for money and breadth of ability. At the top-of-the-range the ELX could well prove attractive to the caravan or horsey set, where as cheaper versions could double as family transport or a tough workhorse where top-of-the-range trim isn't really appropriate.

All models come with a five years/unlimited mileage warranty.

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Mazda3 sharper, smarter, brighter

With global production having passed five million cars at the end of April 2016, the highly acclaimed Mazda3 has been updated with the launch of the 2017 Mazda3.

Highlights across the full hatchback and fastback range include, subtle exterior changes and an updated cabin. Plus, with the introduction of G-Vectoring Control, the debut of Mazda's SKYACTIV-VEHICLE DYNAMICS technology.

Thanks to its KODO: Soul of Motion design and SKYACTIV technology, the current generation of Mazda's global sales leader set new standards when it went on sale in the UK in 2014. Its bold styling, premium quality and advanced technology saw it win praise for its

sharp handling, upmarket cabin, alluring looks and efficient engines.

Maintaining an award-winning range of SKYACTIV petrol and diesel engines, the 2017 Mazda3's broad spread of enhancements are designed to keep it at the forefront of this competitive class. Externally, the 2017 Mazda3 is marked out by a revised grille with a stronger three-dimensional look and a new front fog light bezel.

Across both body styles, revised door mirrors feature wraparound turn indicators, while hatchback versions have a redesigned rear bumper.

The 2017 Mazda3 is available in eight colours including Mazda's new Machine Grey Mica, which having starred on the all-new Mazda MX-5 RF at the 2016 New York Motor Show, makes its production debut on the Mazda3.

The second all-new colour to make its debut is Eternal Blue Mica, while Sonic Silver Metallic is offered for the first time on the Mazda3. SE and SE-L Nav trim cars feature 16-inch alloy wheels, while Sport Nav models benefit from a new design of high-shine finish 18-inch alloy wheels.

Updates

Inside, the 2017 Mazda3's cabin evolves the driver-oriented interior space with a host of updates that include higher-quality switch panels and handle bezels on the doors, plus a newly designed trim insert on the dashboard.

The adoption of an electric parking brake creates space for a more practical centre console, while another highlight is a new leather steering wheel design that enhances feel and style, and if combined with leather seats is heated.

On sale from October 1, the 2017 Mazda3 is

offered with a choice of 105ps 1.5-litre or 150ps 2.2-litre SKYACTIV-D diesel engines, alongside a petrol line-up that includes 120ps and 165ps versions of the 2.0-litre SKYACTIV-G.

Having added the smooth, frugal and sub 100g/km 1.5-litre SKYACTIV-D diesel engine to the Mazda3 last year, both this and the well-established 2.2-litre SKYACTIV-D engine now feature Transient Control, which ensures a more positive throttle response by reducing turbo lag and boosting torque to deliver a petrol-like engine feel.

Refinement has also been enhanced thanks to the introduction of Mazda's Natural Sound Smoother (NSS) technology, which reduces knock noise during starting and low-speed acceleration on diesel engines.

Across the whole range, overall refinement has been substantially improved with added

noise suppression material in the roof, doors, dashboard and transmission tunnel area. In addition, revisions to the front and rear suspension have focused on delivering improved ride comfort and reducing vibration, while at the same time enhancing pin-sharp handling.

The 2017 Mazda3 also features G-Vectoring Control (GVC), the first of Mazda's SKYACTIV-VEHICLE DYNAMICS technologies. It varies engine torque to optimize wheel load to indiscernibly provide more precise handling and improved comfort.

Other technology highlights include the adaption of a full-colour display on the enhanced head-up display system, while for the first time the Mazda3 is offered with Adaptive LED headlights.

On sale in the UK from October 1, the 2017 Mazda3 is priced from £17,595 to £24,195.

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Family cars leading way with safety prioritised

New cars that will appeal to family-oriented buyers are leading the way in prioritising the highest levels of safety as standard, according to test results from the European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP).

The new Renault Scenic, available in the UK later this year, achieves a five-star Euro NCAP rating, with its Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) key in gaining the top score.

The Scenic has a full suite of Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) technology as standard across every model and trim in the range.

This means that City AEB is operating in lower speed conditions to prevent crashes and Inter-Urban AEB is working at higher speeds to give additional protection*. The vehicle is also equipped with pedestrian protection AEB, which improves the safety of vulnerable road users by detecting their presence and braking automatically if a collision is likely because a driver has not seen them.

"Pedestrian AEB testing was introduced into the Euro NCAP tests in 2016 as part of a drive to lower the number people killed or seriously injured in the UK as a result of collision with a vehicle," explained Andrew Miller, chief

technical officer at Thatcham Research and current Euro NCAP president and chairman of the board.

"The fact that the new Renault Scenic is equipped with the technology as part of its AEB functionality is an indication that car makers are responding to the growing pressure on them to consider all road users, not just vehicle occupants."

More than 5,000 people are killed or seriously injured every year on UK roads ** and a reduction in this number would be a very significant benefit of all new cars having AEB fitted as standard.

"Autonomous Emergency Braking is a proven life-saver that significantly reduces the likelihood of a crash," commented Thatcham Research chief executive, Peter Shaw. "Having AEB technology on every model of every new car should now be standard practice for car makers. Renault is to be applauded for recognising this as the responsible course of action."

Buyers looking at cars that traditionally appeal to family oriented drivers now have an improved choice of vehicles with a top Euro NCAP score and high level of safety as standard. The new Renault Scenic, available in the UK later this year, is a clear leader in the small MPV market on standard fitment of Autonomous Emergency Braking, ahead of other vehicles such as Volkswagen Touran that have the same

safety rating but offer AEB on some trim levels only as an option. Euro NCAP's Small Off-Road 4x4 (SUV) category includes two recently launched five-star vehicles that perform strongly on active safety feature fitment, the Volkswagen Tiguan and the SEAT Ateca.

Kia's new Niro Crossover, which will also be competing for attention from family car buyers, performed very well in crash tests and gained a five-star Euro NCAP rating when fitted with the optional safety pack, but unfortunately only the top-of-the-range First Edition model has AEB.

AEB is available on 63 per cent of new cars launched this year, compared to the average of 48 per cent availability*** across all new cars on sale in the UK.

* Claims data for crashes involving vehicles with both these AEB technologies shows that Inter-Urban systems can deliver an additional 24 per cent reduction in third party claims over and above the 21 per cent reduction provided by a basic City system.

** Department for Transport Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain 2014 reveal 446 pedestrians killed and 5,063 seriously injured.

*** Thatcham Research data reveals that AEB is fitted as standard on 21 per cent of new cars available in the UK and optional on a further 27 per cent.

To find out more on Car Safety visit www.thatcham.org/car-safety



Car makers are responding to the growing pressure on them to consider all road users, not just vehicle occupants

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Wolverhampton Casuals ground at Brinsford Lane, Coven



Mick Green with club chairman Gareth Deacon, one of the other five-strong committee members



Mick Green preparing the pitch before this season's big kick off

Another season in the life of evergreen Mick

CLUB stalwart Mick Green has kicked off yet another season of service with Wolverhampton Casuals.

With Casuals' ground located close to Featherstone Prison, in Brinsford Lane, Coven, there is no doubt Green has served his time at the club – 56 years to be exact. But he says he has no plans to escape.

At 71, most people would be looking forward to winding down and perhaps taking a backseat. But for Casuals' unsung hero that is simply not on the agenda.

When pitches need cutting and preparing and there are a few white lines to be painted, Green will be up for the task.

As far as he is concerned Casuals is not just a football club, it's part of the family.

His grandfather James Waldron joined Casuals in 1910 while his uncle, Ken Waldron, also tasted action for the club.

Trend

Green simply followed the family trend but perhaps didn't envisage still being involved for so many years after making his debut as a right-back in 1960.

"This is family for me in a way," he said. "My wife will tell you that. They will be throwing my ashes all over the pitch."

"I never seriously wanted to play for anybody else, although I had offers. I have grown up with it and always felt the club was part of the family."

"My grandfather joined the club in 1910 and my uncle also played for them," said Green. "I just followed my granddad and started playing in 1960 when I left school."

"They had three teams and it was straight into men's football with the third team," he added. "There

SPORTING HEROES

By Nick Elwell

"Trying to get money off the FA. . . you might as well dig a hole 20 foot deep and sit in it and wait."

was no youth football like today. You went straight in at the deep end, getting kicked and clobbered all over the place.

"Then you worked your way up into the first team. I played until I was 40 and I packed in after 25 years playing."

"Sometimes I wish I hadn't packed in at 40. I tell people now to keep playing as long as they can."

"I used to play right wing and then slowly worked my way backwards."

"I even played in goal until I let seven or nine in. I can't remember how many it was. I had three matches in goal. We lost the last one against Birmingham Municipal Officials. The Warwickshire and England cricketer Dennis Amiss used to play for them and I played against him."

Since hanging his boots up, Green has shown plenty of versatility off the field, including ferrying former Albion defender Des Lytle to games during his brief playing stint at the club, and these days he doubles up as match secretary and groundsman for the West Midlands League Premier Division outfit.

"I took on various roles when I finished playing. I used to go with the reserves as the bucket man and I

was already on the committee," he said. "I was treasurer at one time and I am match secretary now and groundsman along with Sam Plant. We look after the two pitches."

Green and Plant serve alongside chairman Gareth Deacon, youth co-ordinator Darren Langford and John Thomas on a hard-working, five-man committee. The club is in good health at the moment despite a reduction in teams and numbers over the years.

Both pitches on the site are rented out to ensure a constant stream of revenue although the recent demise of ground-sharing Trysull has hit the club in the pocket.

"The club is in good shape in general," added Green. "We have just had a new fence put up to ensure our ground grading is good enough to play in the FA Cup."

Pushed

"We have got the senior side managed by Mark Halcroft and three youth teams. The last few years have been good. We have done very well money-wise with the bar and we have pushed forward with different things."

"It's always been a struggle like it is for most amateur football clubs. We don't get a lot of sponsorship and stuff like that."

"Trying to get money off the FA...you might as well dig a hole 20 foot deep and sit in it and wait."

And while Green has no plans to quit, he does worry where the next batch of club stalwarts will come from. "We keep looking for people to join but finding someone is very difficult," he said.

"People just aren't interested, other clubs will tell you the same."

"It's down to the committee to generate the cash. I just wonder what will happen when Sam and I pack in doing the pitches. We try and make it better each year, but it's all about money at the end of the day."



Mick's grandfather James Waldron features, third right, top row, on this picture from the 1930s



Mick looks at some of the old pictures in the clubhouse



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Hales claim victory again in Memorial

**Old Halesonians 2nds 12
Hinckley 2nds 31**

OLD Hales Seconds faced last season's league winners Hinckley at Wassell Grove and were on the wrong end of a 31-12 scoreline.

With a 17-0 deficit, Jake Shellis grabbed a score back for Old Hales, and the game was out of reach at 31-5 by the time James Worton scored a late consolation try converted by Shellis.

**Old Halesonians 3rds 5
Bournville 2nds 69**

NEWLY-PROMOTED Old Hales 3rds started their first season in the Midlands Reserve Merit League Division 3 with a baptism of fire when they met a well drilled and slick Bournville 2nd XV.

Although Old Hales fought hard they only managed to cross the Bournville try line once when George Eccles scored. Bournville had the better of the encounter and ran in 11 tries during the afternoon.

**Old Halesonians 4ths 31
Stourbridge Lions 10**

OLD Hales had a good turnout for the annual Dave Cook Memorial Cup game against Stourbridge.

Twenty five Old Hales players played some part in this entertaining game that Old Hales won for the fourth year in succession.

The final score was 31-10 to Old Hales, with Matt Wagstaff scoring three tries and landing three conversions. Chris Harris and Richard Thomas also scored tries to seal a well-earned victory.

Old Halesonians first team overcame Longton 33-20.

Swimmers earn promotion back to top division

JUNIOR swimmers from Halesowen Swimming Club have made an immediate return to the Nuneaton League Division 1.

The squad was determined to bounce back after relegation last year and travelled to Wolverhampton for the Division 2 Junior League Final. Strong performances in the previous three rounds had gained them their place at this prestigious event.

The venue was packed out with family and friends wanting to cheer on their team. They battled throughout the gala knowing what was at stake, and they came third after the 51 races, behind Chase and Solihull, placing them third in the table and confirming promotion.

Stars of the show were Niamh Larkin and Jacob Bailey who each won two individual events. Niamh won both the girls 12 years and under two lengths breaststroke and two lengths butterfly, whilst Jacob won the boys 11 years and under two lengths breaststroke and two lengths backstroke.

Jamie Worton won the boys 12 years and under two lengths butterfly and Adam Ryan in the boys 11 years and under two lengths freestyle.

The boys 11 years and under relay team were unbeatable in both their medley and freestyle relays.

Siblings taking the world by storm

MARTIAL art siblings Reuben and Kiya Charlesworth have been crowned world champions.

The fighters, from Halesowen Martial Arts Centre, joined more than 1,000 competitors, from 20-plus countries, for the tournament in Germany.

Kiya was up first against a strong Italian girl, beating her to then take on an Austrian. She made it through to the final against a German Tae Kwon Do fighter, but she wasn't good enough to oust Kiya, who became world champion at the first attempt – and on the eve of her 13th birthday.

As she celebrated her debut world crown, Reuben was next on the tatami looking to add to his 12 titles. He had some great fights in both his individual and Grand Champion divisions, showing why he is regarded as one of the best talents in the kickboxing.

Martial arts

Each fight he dominated and outclassed the others, to be crowned world and grand champion. Father and coach Jason said: "This was a good test for my two children as they prepare to travel to Italy and Romania to compete soon."

He added Reuben and Kiya were looking for sponsorship from local companies. Anyone that can help is asked to call 07889627929.

● Meanwhile, a Stourbridge fighter is putting the town on the map with martial arts success.

Jason Leung has been WAKO British champion for five years on the trot, having also lifted national and English titles, with a combination of styles including taekwondo, kungfu, jeet kune do, kickboxing, and karate.

Leung, aged 26, a distribution worker, has been practising martial arts for 10 years and is a first dan black belt in tae kwon do. He trains at the TAGB academy at the Stourbridge School. For more information, call 0800 052 5960.

GREAT SCOTT — IT'S A GOLD

PARA-CYCLIST Sophie Thornhill hailed Halesowen's Helen Scott as her best friend after the pair clinched Paralympic gold in Brazil.

Scott piloted visually impaired Thornhill in the 1000m time trial with the duo setting a Paralympic record with a time of one minute and 6.283 seconds.

The result means Scott has now won medals in each of the last two Paralympics with the 26-year-old also scooping a silver and a bronze when she partnered Aileen McGlynn at London 2012. The result kick-started GB's old rush at the Games. And the duo teamed up again on Sunday to come third in the women's B 3000m individual pursuit final.

"There's no words to describe how happy, relieved, proud we are – it's just incredible," Thornhill said. "We're the best of friends and that helps our training relationship massively."

"If you don't get on it's so much hard work, and luckily we do."

"It makes it enjoyable and not just all hard work."

Thornhill and Scott were the penultimate riders to race and faced an anxious wait to find out if they had clinched gold when Dutch duo Larissa Klaassen and pilot Haliegh Dolman followed them onto the track.

The British cyclists finished second to Klaassen and Dolaman at the Track World Championships in March.

And Scott admitted there were a few nerves when the Netherlands riders were competing.

"We've always had a fast opening 500 metres, so we knew if we got out quicker than anybody else it would mean they would have to work double hard to try to catch us," she said.

"They did at the worlds, they caught us, but this time it was different."

"To win was incredible and for me to complete the set is amazing."



Thornhill and Scott

Joy as Jordanne nets bronze



Jordanne Whiley and doubles partner Lucy Shuker celebrate their bronze medal

HALESOWEN tennis ace Jordanne Whiley took solace in winning Paralympic bronze after missing out on two gold medals.

The 24-year-old, together with doubles partner Lucy Shuker, recovered from a second-set setback to win women's doubles bronze.

Whiley, from Halesowen, had been struggling with a painful wrist injury that had left her barely able to hold a racket and played a large part in her exit in the singles quarter-finals and doubles semi-finals earlier this week.

She and Shuker, the third seeds, beat Japan's fourth seeds 6-3, 0-6, 6-1 to match their achievement from London 2012.

Whiley and Shuker hit back, after Yui Kamiji and Miho Nijo dominated the second set, to win in one hour and 27 minutes.

Whiley, playing against her regular doubles partner in Kamiji, was happy to overcome the wrist injury that hampered her performance this week.

She said: "In London I was young and quite fit and now, not that I'm not young, but I had this injury 48 hours ago and I did think that it was over for me. But the medical team have been absolutely incredible and got me back on track to win this, so it's kind of a little bit more special knowing that I came from nowhere, not being able to hold a racket, to now winning a bronze."

Skipper's 'get it right' plea to cricketers

HALESOWEN Cricket Club are still in with a chance of promotion after a nervy win over Old Elizabethans last weekend.

Skipper Richard Brooker is urging his side to get it right at Wombourne on Saturday after making hard work of their latest win.

Halesowen reduced Old Elizabethans to 140 all-out with Brooker himself taking 3-21, Masharaff Shazad 3-24 and Dylan Ross Watt 2-33.

But they looked to have blown it at 89-7 before Tom Wickstead notched 13, Eddie Rhodes remained unbeaten on 23 and Brooker nine to see the side home by a wicket.

Said Brooker: "We got over the line in the end but my goodness we made hard work of it."

"On one hand I am proud to captain a side that never throws the towel in on the other hand our top order batsmen have once again been bailed out of trouble by the lower order."

"We have one grandstand week to go and we need to get it right."

The second team were defeated by league champions Wolverhampton at Danescourt on Saturday.

Put into bat in a 26-over game, Halesowen mustered just 127-7 on a seaming surface with a series of cameo knocks.

But Wolverhampton, who have been head and shoulders better than most sides in the division this year, raced to victory by eight wickets in 23 overs.

The second team have a nail-biting must-win game at home this weekend against Moseley to stay in the Premier Division.

Meanwhile the 3rd team gave themselves a lifeline in the Worcester League with a win over Kidderminster and the fourth team maintained their third spot in the division with a nervy two-wicket victory over Ross on Wye.

Anderson on double in vital home win

HALESOWEN Town 3 Workington 2
HALESOWEN hitman Kaiman Anderson struck another two goals in a much-needed first home league win.

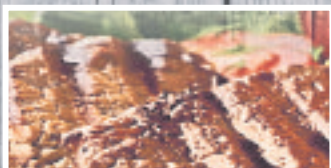
The first came after 16 minutes when Sam Smith's attempted clearance struck Anderson before hitting the net. Jordan Goddard slotted home the second.

Matthew Douglas powered a free header into the net from a 64th minute corner, but Anderson then restored Halesowen's two goal advantage after 78 minutes.

Workington set up a tense finish when Josh Calvert shot home from 30 yards with less than 10 minutes to go.

★ ★ ★

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Inside your wrap

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are made equal

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a same day appointment

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Implants, the dentists'
first choice



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Our services at a glance.

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For the right person it is possible for us to fit a full arch of upper or lower teeth in a single day. A highly skilled procedure, it engages the disciplines of our Practice Principal, implant dentist and lab technicians. Quite literally, your smile can be restored in just a few hours.



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Sometimes referred to as removable bridges, partial dentures are used to span the gaps left by teeth that have been lost. They can be fitted to the lower or upper jaw and are essential for maintaining the long-term integrity of the mouth. Without them, existing teeth can become compromised.



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Can dentures ever be glamorous? Indeed they can and the Denture Clinic has plenty of satisfied customers who have undergone a transformation in their looks. Regularly we've been able to turn back the clock with prosthetics that support facial tissues that had become sunken and pinched.

The Denture Clinic also offers its own dedicated Practice Plan, Interest free finance, Copy dentures, Denture relines, Denture stabilisation, Same-day repairs, Dental sedation, A referring service for fellow practitioners and 3D scanning

Not all dentures *are made equal*

Practice Principal
Steven Burchell
Dip CDT RCS(Eng)
GDC 108353
looks at what he believes
sets his clinic apart in its
prosthetic provision

NESTLING in the heart of the Black Country is the Denture Clinic. Our nearest landmark is Dudley's famous castle and of course, we have Teddy Gray's legendary herbal sweet factory opposite our practice.

By any standards, the clinic is remarkably well presented, but it's not what we are noted for though we are fiercely proud of what's been achieved over the years at our North Street site.

As someone said: "Who'd have thought little old Dudley would become famous for its dentures?"

It's not quite like the acclaim enjoyed by our industrial forefathers, who in the early 1800s saw the area become pivotal in the Industrial Revolution, but our teeth have certainly made an impression on a national scale.

We attract patients from Dorset in the south, from the Scottish Highlands and North Wales and the ex-pats community from Spain and Portugal. Remarkable!

And we find the kind of patients we attract equally exceptional: A multi-millionaire with his own jet, a former SAS mountain warfare specialist, healthcare professionals, company directors and 'our little old ladies from across the town.'

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You see, not all dentures are created equal. The quality control on our prosthetics is exacting, with every process of prescription under one roof.

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The Denture Clinic works alongside our North Street Dental and Implant Clinic and much of our denture provision also utilises the skills of our general dentistry practitioners. It's a powerful symmetry that successfully fuses a number of disciplines to give our patients the best possible clinical outcomes.



Dental technician Steven Morris (GDC 142474) works on traditional dentures

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Wheelchair accessible dentistry

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We are privileged to be able to offer general dentistry, cosmetic dentistry and dental implant therapy alongside cutting-edge denture provision.

Aware that those who have limited mobility struggle to get the dental attention they deserve, while designing the practice we polled our patients on what they would ideally require when going to the dentist.

They asked for ground-level surgeries, an access without steps, a dedi-

Our mobility friendly approach:

- Dedicated disabled person's drop-off point
- Private, secure parking next to entrance
- Wheelchair friendly level access
- Ground-floor air conditioned surgeries
- Break-knee dental chair for easy transfers
- Toilet facilities for the disabled
- No ramps, no steps to navigate



cated disabled person's drop-off point, ground-level suitable toilets and a dentist's break-knee chair that makes transfers easy, where patients don't have to lift their own legs.

Once seated, the patient's legs can gently be raised automatically as the chair unfolds and is tilted backwards to suit the dental procedures in hand.

There is a private car park at the rear of our building, a block paved area next to the disabled parking bays to help with those with manual chairs and the ground-level surgeries are large and air conditioned.

In our own research we discovered just how frustrating it is to find a practice that can easily accommodate those with mobility needs. Sadly, after disappointing results

many people just give up looking and abandon their oral health.

If you wish to ensure we are suitable for your specific needs, just call us and we'll arrange for you to visit. We can't promise to understand personal disabilities, but will do everything possible to help those with mobility challenges receive dental care with us.

Straight talk on crooked teeth



FEW people have a DNA that gifts them an impeccable smile and perfectly aligned teeth. Dentistry to challenge the genetic code that has compromised our smiles has become more and more accessible – not least through the Invisalign orthodontic therapy.

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There are no unsightly wires or clamps and most people would not even realise these braces are being worn.

Thanks to advances in technology and dental materials, conspicuous, chunky braces are no longer an inevitable step in straightening misaligned teeth.

Comfortable to wear

Invisalign treatment is designed to slot seamlessly into daily routines without any fuss or embarrassment. There's no need to worry about mouth irritations as the transparent aligners are comfortable to wear and can easily be removed for eating, drinking, brushing and flossing.

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The treatment model consists of computer generated aligners that are changed every two weeks or so for a new prescription. Each aligner is individually manufactured for the patient. Over a number of weeks as the aligners are changed teeth begin to move into their correct position.

3-D treatment plan

A virtual 3-D treatment plan (ClinCheck© treatment plan), which will configure the aligners required, shows the series of movements teeth will go through, allowing a clear insight into what the finished look will be like. If you're ready for a smile transformation that does not interfere with your day-to-day life, Invisalign may be right for you. Call us and we'd be happy to talk to you about your options.



Sophie Mae BSc Dental Hygiene and Therapy (B'ham) GDC 264333 offers direct access appointments for those requiring a same-day scale and polish

Direct access to hygienist Sophie

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What will happen at my dental hygienist's appointment? You will be given 45 minutes of clinical time, receive a thorough oral assessment, an intra oral camera will be used, you will receive a scale and polish and a lesson on how best to look after your smile.

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Teeth whitening



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Our cost-effective procedure – look out for special offers on **Facebook** and the new North Street Dental and Implant Clinic website – is approved by the GDC.

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Implant Clinic
An Independent Practice

Strictly stunning! Norma's new look would get a 'ten from Len'



Norma Aston – party snap a turning point

A PICTURE snapped at a dance group's farewell party to mark a friend's departure to Jamaica showed more than what vivacious Norma Aston was expecting.

As the well-wishes were made and memorable dancing stories exchanged amongst members of the Uksalsafeet classes at Willenhall's Chart Centre, the cameras and smart phones did their work.

But a single profile shot of Norma captured a different story to all the other photographs taken at that happy event.

"My teeth had been troublesome for years, but when I saw the photo and realised just how far forward my top teeth had moved I knew I had to get something done. It was a turning point for me," recalls Norma of Willenhall.

The youthful 60-something-year-old salsa enthusiast, who attends classes every Saturday to help

perfect her technique, adds: "There were a number of things that came together which encouraged me to get things sorted."

"I had seen an article in my local paper about Steven's [Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng)] work."

"I knew what I wanted and already had in my mind going down the implant denture route."

Correct choice

"At the same time, my step-daughter was encouraging me to see her dentist, Dr Owain Rees."

Adds Norma: "Dental work is such a visual thing and unlike hospital surgical work we get to choose who undertakes it."

"It was so important for me that I made the correct choice."

Husband Don takes up the story: "We'd done some research, but websites can really say anything

and it's not the same as getting an impression face to face."

"When we saw Steven, he was so enthusiastic about his work and instilled confidence in us that his clinic would be able to do the job well."

"We were never pressured and told to go away and think things through before making a decision."

With referrals in-house, Norma was seen by North Street Dental and Implant Clinic surgeon Dr Owain Rees BDS, DGD (UK) DIP IMP DENT (UCL). Her treatment plan included intravenous sedation, the placing of six lower implants to support a removable overdenture and a traditional upper denture prescription.

Norma, a former City Hospital accounts manager, says: "My new teeth... I couldn't ask for more and I'm amazed at the difference. They look so natural."

Fact: Missing teeth can have a hugely corrosive effect on lifestyles and self-esteem. We have met patients who have confessed to seriously compromised diets, those who have lived reclusively and others whose daily agenda has been punctuated by a relentless regime of dental fixatives and excuses to avoid social engagements.

Fact: The replacement of missing teeth using implant procedures is the preferred clinical option. Our patients who have received this kind of dentistry have regularly reported that their whole lives have been affected for the better, allowing them to live more spontaneously and without the nagging fears of 'embarrassing denture moments.'

Fact: Implants are a hugely creative dental 'tool' that can deliver numerous solutions from single teeth to whole arches of teeth. Dr Owain Rees BDS, DGD (UK) DIP IMP DENT (UCL) is our hugely experienced implant dentist and has been involved in these kind of highly-killed procedures for more than 25 years.

Implants

the favoured option for replacement teeth



IT'S hard to imagine after losing natural teeth, things could ever be quite the same again. But a growing number of satisfied patients have found a renewed confidence by having teeth replaced with implants.

With predictable outcomes, this form of long-term dental investment has proved so popular at our North Street clinics that surgery time for procedures has been doubled.

Some patients have ditched their traditional dentures for implant retained over-dentures and those with gaps have had their arches of teeth restored with single or multiple implants.

Having implants, once only the privilege of stars, is now commonplace and the treatment qualifies for our interest-free loans (subject to status).

Although recent figures suggest that oral health is improving drastically, millions of UK adults suffer with tooth loss. It can be painful, unattractive and embarrassing.

Efficient

Dental implants are the nearest possible substitute for natural teeth. The procedure of placing them to support retained dentures, bridges, single or multiple teeth demands a complex and meticulous type of dentistry and is headed up by Dr Owain Rees BDS, DGD (UK) Dip Imp Dent (UCL) GDC 61575. Owain has been placing implants for more than 25 years.

Recognised as the most efficient way of replacing missing teeth, implants can provide a fixed dental solution –



Dr Owain Rees BDS, DGD (UK) Dip Imp Dent (UCL) GDC 61575 and top, the North Street staff

the implant acting as a substitute for a tooth root on which a prosthetic is fixed.

The following options are available:

- **Implant-supported single crowns.**
- **Implant-supported multiple teeth.**
- **Implant-supported bridges.**
- **Implant-retained upper and lower over-dentures** – you would never need a denture adhesive again suffer sore spots or those horribly, embarrassing moments when dentures have let you down.
- **The 'teeth in a day' procedures** – where a whole upper or lower arch of fixed teeth can be secured on implants in a single day. (Not everyone is a suitable candidate for this procedure)

Let's consider what implants can achieve: They function like your own teeth; allow you to live impulsively; offer long-term solutions; can fix single or multiple teeth; do not compromise adjacent healthy teeth; implant retained over-dentures do not slip; and implants can be cared for like normal teeth.

Implants experience spanning 25 years

WITH more than 25 years' experience as a dental implant surgeon, Dr Owain Rees BDS, DGD (UK) DIP IMP DENT (UCL) looks after the complex surgical cases at North Street Dental. Qualifying from Birmingham University in 1986, he initially worked as a house officer in oral surgery at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. His surgical mentor was the late Dennis Wedgewood MBBS BDS FDSRCS, consultant Oral and Maxillofacial surgeon.

Advanced

"Very early on I was exposed to implant work and placed my first implant in the late '80s."

"Since then I've had a special interest in this field of dentistry," says Dr Rees. In furthering his surgical skills, he became a sedationist and undertook postgraduate implantology training with the Eastman Dental Institute.

A further implant qualification followed in advanced implantology for experienced practitioners.

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